
Mr. BROWN's
Funeral Sermon

For the Reverend
Mr. Thomas Symmes :

Together with
A more Large and Particular ACCOUNT
of Him, annexed thereto.

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Divine Help Implored
Under the Loss of
Godly & Faithful Men.

A Funeral Sermon

At Bradford, Oct. 31. 1725

Some time after the

DEATH

of the Reverend

Mr. Thomas Sparrow



Pastor of the Church there:

Containing some Hints of the Character
Together with ACCOUNT

A more Large and Particular ACCOUNT
of Him annexed thereto.

By JOHN A. BROWN

Pastor of the Church of England

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By *JOHN BROWN, A. M.*
Pastor of the Church at Haverhil.

Recommended by Divers Ministers.

B O S T O N: Printed by T. Fleet, for S. Gerrish,
near the Brick Meeting-House in Cornhill,
1726.

WE the Subscribers having considered the ensuing Sermon, together with the Account annexed of the Reverend Mr. Symmes, do unanimously approve thereof, and heartily recommend the same to the Publick. As well to Encourage the Author in his First Fruits from the Press; as to Signify that We join with Him, in Lamenting unto God our sore Bereavement; Imploring Divine Help of Him, who hath the Residue of the Spirit; to impart unto and increase upon Us, the Good Spirit of his Deceased Servant: Looking to our Maker to teach Us and All his People particularly, to profit under his Death; and make his Memory Precious, and his Good Example Instructive and Quickning to All that knew it, or may hereby be acquainted with it.



Thomas Blowers,
Moses Hale,
John Rogers,
Samuel Phillips,
John Tufts,
John Barnard.

Funeral Sermon

For the Reverend

Mr. THOMAS SYMMES.

PSALM XII 1.

*Help, Lord, for the Godly Man ceaseth: for
the Faithful fail from among the Children
of Men.*

IT is an exceeding great Loss to the World,
for Godly and Faithful Men to cease out
of the Earth and fail from their Service-
ableness. It is an heavy Stroke on a Land,
to lose such Men, who are the Beauty and Strength
of their Nation, while they live: — it makes
the Glory of Jacob to become thin, and the fat-
ness

ness of his Flesh wax lean —. And it is especially a most grievous Loss to the particular Places, where They dwelt and conversed most.

IT would be almost an Insupportable Loss; but that GOD liveth still, our Rock, and the God of our Salvation. — It is He that taketh them away from Us, whatever their Office or Qualifications have been: *He taketh away — the Prophet — and the eloquent Orator*; even the LORD, who will have us be still, and know that He is God: who is Righteous in all his Ways and Holy in all his Works; who is Pitiful and of tender mercies who in the midst of Wrath remembreth Mercy, and chasteneth us for our Profit; that We might be partakers of his Holiness: Who is Wise and Powerful, to make bitter things sweet and bring Good out of Evil; and to heal the Breaches in the midst of Us. In a Word, He is able to *sanctify* the sorest Losses; and by them to do us as much Good, as by the *Enjoyment* of our Dearest Friends and Comforts: — This is matter of Support unto us.

THAT it may be so, there is something incumbent on Us the Survivors. — We must not lie down *stupid and senseless*, not considering the Work of the Lord, nor regarding the Operation of his Hands: nor yet *overwhelmed and desponding*, as if there were no Hope; much less *sullen or impatient* under the hand of God: But We must under a deep and *humble* Resentment of our Loss, be looking to our Maker. Isa. XVII. 7 *Then shall a Man look to his Maker and his Eyes be unto the Holy One of Israel.*

FOR this end. We must remember what Blessings and Helps they were, and endeavour suitably to lay to heart their Removal from us. The contrary is very displeasing to God, and looks so much the more Ominous to Us. Isa. LVII. 1. *The Righteous perisheth and no Man layeth it to heart — None considering that the righteous is taken away from the Evil to come.* God hath said that the Memory of the Just is blessed (Prov. X. 7.) the Righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance Psal. CXII. 6. intimating not only that they oftentimes are so, but that They ought to be so. This may be serviceable in order to our Imitating their good Example; and so filling up their places: and to prepare us, to make the more earnest Supplication to the Father of Spirits, that He that led us by the right hand of *Moses*, would put his Holy Spirit within us.

NOW, therefore, It having pleased our Sovereign Lord, the God of the Spirits of all Flesh, so suddenly and awfully to bereave us of the Worthy and Excellent Pastor of this Church, so bright a Star in this Golden Candlestick, a Burning and a Shining Light; who is fallen down at once from his Meridian Strength and Lustre; whose Light being extinguished, is enough to make the Land mourn, the Churches round about to Languish; puts the Town into Confusion and Astonishment, his Family into Tears and Sackcloth: It becomes us, not only externally to bewail, but sincerely *lay to heart*, and religiously to Lament this dark Providence. And I look upon my self obliged in particular to drop a Tear over my Deceased Father, and bring my Spices to embalm his Memory,

Memory, and implore Divine Help with You under so distressing a Loss.

AND the first meditation, that occur'd to me on his Death, was this of the Psalmist in my Text; *Help, Lord, for the Godly Man ceaseth; for the Faithful fail from among the children of Men:* which Words you will doubtless be ready to apply, with me, to the present occasion.

I design not to take any pains to consider the primary Scope and Reference of them, to run a parallel between David's case under Saul's Persecution, and Ours: nor to spend any time in paraphrasing the Terms! But only, first laying down the obvious Sum and Purport of them, I shall endeavour to explain the several Branches, as they come in course; not strictly as they were applied to David's case, but more laxly according to the general Import of the Words, and as an independent Passage.

THE Sum of the Words then, or **DOCTRINE** contained in them is This; Scil.

That, When the Godly Man ceaseth, and the Faithful fail from among the children of Men; it becomes and greatly concerns those that remain, to apply Themselves more earnestly unto God for Help.

SO, We see David did in this case; and doubtless this was written for our Learning, that We through Patience and Comfort of the Scriptures might have Hope.

THE Doctrine may be discoursed in these two parts, 1. Godly and Faithful Men sometimes cease and fail. 2. Then We must look to God for Help.

1. IT is too often a sad experienced Truth, that *the Godly Man ceaseth and the Faithful fail from among the children of Men.*

THE Godly must not always continue, can't always hold out here. — Moses, though his natural Force be not abated, must Die and end his Service. And Eli's spiritual strength seemed to decay; his Zeal for God and Fidelity failed, while he was alive. The Righteous perisheth — Your Fathers, where are They, and the Prophets do they Live for ever? — David observed it in his time, not as a strange thing; but speaks of it, in the Text, as a Proverb; in a great measure the common Lot of the poor sons of men. The Godly Man ceaseth and the Faithful fail *from among the Children of Men.*

IT may be useful, here, and suitable to Enquire, 1. Into the Characters of Godly and Faithful Men. 2. In what respects They may be said to cease and fail. 3. What Improvement is to be made thereof?

(1) Let us consider and Enquire into the *Characters* of Godly and Faithful Men.

And I shall say —

1. Who is a *Godly Man*.

[THE Hebrew Word (*Chasid* from the Substantive *Chesed*, usually rendred in the Greek *Elevs*, and in Latin *Misericordia*), "signifieth
B "Gracious

Gracious or Merciful, — One that hath obtained Mercy, Goodness, Piety, Grace and Benignity from the Lord; and is pious, kind, gracious and merciful unto Others. But the Hebrew word, is more extensive than the Greek or Latin: When it signifieth Piety, it don't intend vulgar or ordinary Piety, but eminent, remarkable and excelling Piety." Saith Mr. Leigh.] Hence

1. A Godly Man is One, that hath obtained Mercy, Grace and Favour from the Lord. One that hath found Grace in his Sight, tasted that the Lord is Gracious; — experienced his excellent Lovingkindness, Psal. IV. 3. *The Lord hath for a part the Godly for Himself.* Such a one the Lord hath distinguished from the World and made his Favourite. A Godly Man is One that hath obtained Mercy for the pardoning his Sins. Psal. XXXII. 6. *for this, that is for Pardon, after my Example, shall every one that is Godly, pray unto Thee* — A Godly person is a Justified person, having an interest in the Son of God who justifieth the Ungodly.†

2. A Godly Man is One, that is, like God, disposed to shew Mercy and Kindness unto Others. That endeavours to copy his imitable Perfections, to be Holy as He is Holy, Merciful as He is Merciful, and Perfect as He is Perfect. One that is kindly affectioned, ready, and disposed to Do Good towards all both Friends and Enemies as God

God is, Eph. V. 1. *Be Ye therefore followers of God as dear Children.* that is, (as You are directed in the next foregoing words Chap. IV. ult.) *Be Ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another; even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven You.*

3. A Godly Man is one that *lives Godly* in Christ Jesus. One that worshipeth God in the Spirit, rejoiceth in Christ Jesus and hath no confidence in the flesh; * Denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, living soberly righteously and Godly in this present world. †

HE is One that hath the fear of God before his Eyes. One that is truly Penitent, having Godly Sorrow for all his Sins, and turning to the Living and true God in Christ Jesus.

HE is One that endeavours to *serve God* acceptably with Reverence and Godly Fear. One that prays to God alway. Psal. XXXII. 6. *Every One that is Godly shall pray unto Thee* — : And performeth devoutly all Duties of Divine Worship in private and publick. Godliness often intends all the Duties of the first Table of the Law.

AGAIN, A Godly Man is One that *doeth Good* in his place; after the Example of the blessed God. Gal. VI. 10. *As We have opportunity, Let us Do Good unto all men* — . We should study the utmost Conformity to God, not only in our inward Temper and Disposition, but also in our outward Carriage and Actions: be merciful as our

Heavenly Father is merciful, and express all the Charity that We can, towards the Souls and Bodies of Others, Doing Good to all, even as God doth; yet Distinguishing our Friends; for so doth God. Psal. XI. ult. *for the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, and his countenance doth behold the Upright.* — We must do Good even to our worst Enemies, after God's Example. Mat. V. 44. 45.

— *Love your Enemies — do good to them that hate you —*; that Ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven. &c.

FINALLY, A Godly Man is one that is sincere in all he does before God and Men; acts from a good Principle and aims at a right End; and makes conscience of doing all things as near as he can in a right manner. Not contented with a form of Godliness without the power of it; but doing common Actions after a Godly sort. Such a one is described II Cor. I. 12. having the testimony of his Conscience witnessing for him, that in simplicity and *Godly sincerity*; not with fleshly wisdom but by the Grace of God, he hath his conversation in the world.

2. LET us enquire what is implied in the Character of a Faithful Man. "This Noun Adjective comes from the Substantive *Emunah* in the Hebrew signifying truth, faith, firmness. 'Tis applied to *Moses's* Hands, lift against *Amaleck* which were *steady*, Exod. XVII. 12. It don't always signify a persuasion of the Truth of those things which are spoken to us, but that Reliance and Dependence which we place in
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any ones Goodness or Power, though there be
 "no words in the case."

THE Character of a Faithful Man may imply in it,

1. THAT a Man be *steady firm and constant* in his Duty to God. And thus Faithfulness supposeth Godliness in an eminent Degree and Measure: Without Piety Men won't nor can't be properly called Faithful Men; but a Principle of true Piety disposeth Men to be faithful, and where this prevails, Men *will* be faithful, in all Relations. A *faithful* Person is, in Scripture Phrase, equivalent to a true Believer and Saint †, and Servant of God ‖. He is one that standeth by Faith, nothing wavering; not tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine, but established in the Faith, and waxing strong, giving Glory to God with faithful *Abraham* **.

A Faithful Man is one that hath not his Principles to chuse; much less is at a loss what to chuse, or whom to serve: but resolved to serve the Lord! And then, is constant, steady and unmoveable, and abounding in the work of the Lord. One that don't habitually neglect or omit any Duty; that don't draw back from following Christ, nor give way to Temptation, but hold out unto the end. Rev. 11. 10. *Be thou faithful unto Death.*— One that continues diligent about his Master's Business till He comes, Mat. XXIV. 45, 46. *Who then is a faithful and wise Servant?— Whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.*

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* Leigh, Crit. Sac. † Tim. 6. 2. Col. 1. 2. ‖ Psal. 101. 6.

** Neh. 9. 8.

2. A Faithful Man is one who is *True to his Word*. God is said to be faithful when he performs his Promises, (Heb. X. 23.) So That Man is faithful, who is as good as his word; as good as he pretends and seems to be, Prov. XX. 6. *A faithful Man, who can find? i. e. "One who is indeed what he seemeth and professeth himself to be"*. He is one that will keep a Secret entrusted with him, Prov. XI. 12. *He that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.* And will make good his promise to his Neighbour: Prov. XIV. 5. *A Faithful witness will not Ly.*—

3. A Faithful Man is one that is *Diligent*, and *Honest*, and seeks to do all the Good he can in his Calling. One that improves his Talents, industriously makes use of all those Advantages which God affords him, to serve his Maker, and serve his Generation withal; Mat. XXV. 21. *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant, thou hast been Faithful in a few things; — i. e. in improving a few Talents.*

HE is one that is *honest* and *upright*, and not *deceitful*; fair in his dealings, and performs the business of his Calling *well*; — not slightly, but *thoroughly*; as the Workmen in K. Josiah's time, that were employed in repairing the House of the Lord; of whom 'tis said, II Chron. XXXIV. 12. that they *did the work faithfully*; that is, they made *good work* in repairing the House. And such as those Overseers in good Jeboiada's time; of whom 'tis said, II King. XII. 15. that there was *no reckoning* made with them, into whose hand they

they delivered the Money to be bestowed on the Workmen : *for they dealt faithfully*, i. e. They were honest and true to their trust.

A Faithful Man is one that looks to perform well every Duty of his Calling. Thus Moses was faithful in all his house, (Num. XII. 7.) He was not partial in his Duty, but in every point did according to his Trust and Charge, neglecting nothing which God commanded.

THUS, A Faithful Christian, is one that improves his Time and his Strength ; his Knowledge, Interest, Estate and the like, to the best Advantage ; his own and others spiritual Good, Luk. XVI. 12. *If ye have not been faithful in that which is another Man's, who shall give you that which is your own?* implying that Men ought to be faithful in improving their common Gifts, as they would be true Christians, as they would have special Grace. — One that performs all Duties, doing justice, and loving mercy, and walking humbly with God : — He, I Say, is a faithful Christian.

A Faithful Friend is one that will keep Counsel ; One that will be free and intimate ; will tell his Friend of all his Faults ; put him in mind of all his Duty ; and most affectionately do him all the Good he can. —

A Faithful Minister is one that takes heed to his Ministry, declares the whole Counsel of God, unto every one committed to his Charge ; administering all Ordinances in their season, to their proper Subjects ; and continuing therein, and giving himself wholly to them. —

Having

HAVING thus, briefly hinted who are *Godly and Faithful Men*, I come now to Enquire in the second place, —

(2.) IN what respects and When may These *Godly and Faithful Men* be said to *cease and fail*?

Ans. 1. WHEN their *Strength of Body and Powers of Mind fail*; or for want of *Opportunity* they are not able to do *Service* in their places. —

When their *Understanding, Judgment, and Memory* fail them; their *Senses* decay; or when through *Persecution* or any other means their *Hands* cannot perform their enterprize.

2. WHEN their *Grace* is at a *Stand and Land* *guisheth*: when they grow *deceitful, idle, slothful, remiss*. — Thus it is with some, who like the *Church of Sardis*, have need to strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die. Even the *Wise Virgins* themselves, sometimes *slumber and sleep*. There are, too often, times of *Declension*; — this is what our Text principally intends.

3. WHEN they are cut down by *Death*, and perish out of the *Earth*: then they may be said to *fail*. Indeed,

(1.) THEN, They don't *utterly cease*, so as no more to have a *Being*. Their *Bodies* indeed perish, but not without hopes of a better *Existence* in the *Resurrection-State*: Their *Souls* cease not at all, but go to be with *God and Christ*, which is far better than to abide in the *flesh* *.

But,

* *Eccles. 12. 7. Phil. 1. 23.*

But, now *Behold* *the* *children* *of* *men*.

(2.) **THEY** *cease* *from* *among* *the* *children* *of* *men*.
The places that now know them, shall know them no more. They shall behold Man no more with the Inhabitants of the world.

1. **THEIR** *Persons* *cease*. Their Souls and Bodies are severed. The Man that used to be in this or that House, in this or that Relation; in this or that Employment, is here no more.

2. **THEIR** *Service* *and* *Labours* *cease*. Rev. XIV.

13. *Blessed* *are* *the* *dead*, *which* *die* *in* *the* *Lord*,
they *rest* *from* *their* *Labours*. Eccl. IX. 10. *There*
is *no* *Work*, *nor* *Device*, *nor* *Knowledge*, *nor* *Wisdom* *in*
the *Grave* *whither* *thou* *goest*. Joh. IX. 4. *The*
Night *cometh*, *when* *no* *Man* *can* *work*.

THEY can no more *Devise*, *invent*, *contrive*,
or *consult* any thing to our Help; in that very day
their thoughts perish. Psal. CXLVI. 4.

THEIR *Words* are all at an end. They can
Pray no more with and for us; *Instruct*, *Warn* and
Counsel us no more; in a proper sense.

THEIR *Works* *cease*. They can no more *Wor-*
ship God in his Ordinances; nor *Serve* their Ge-
neration in their Callings: No more *Set* any
Example before us; no more *Do* any *Alms*, or
Deeds of Charity for our Souls or Bodies——!

But I pass now to say,——

(3.) **WHAT IMPROVEMENT** we are to
make of this. And here,

1. **WE** should *take* *notice* of it: Behold how
the Godly are taken out of the World; * *See* *their*

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End.

End. Let not the righteous perish, and no man regard it, but *consider* the end of their conversation.

2. BE *humbled* under it, as a *token* of God's Anger come and coming out against us; and therefore *mourn* under the Loss; and be *afraid* of God's Anger; and *turn* to Him that smiteth us.

3. REMEMBER what they *were*, and *have done*; and be Thankful—, and Imitate them.

4. LEARN our own Frailty and Danger—, and *prepare* to follow them.

AND now let us endeavour thus to Improve our late Awful and Sorrowful Bereavement. It hath pleased God to cause our Father, Friend and Pastor to *cease* and *fail* from us, not by old Age, or Slothfulness, or decay of his Gifts or Graces, or Usefulness while he lived; but *Death* has brought him *suddenly* to an end of his Labours—. What remains for us, is to *profit* under his Death, and *prepare* to follow him. For this end, let us—

FIRST, Remember what He *was*, and what He *did*; how he *Lived*, and how he *Died*. Here I shall not pretend to give a formal and full Character of him; partly because it has been done already, better than I am capable of doing it; and partly because my Discourse, nor the Time won't allow me; but only as my Subject leads me, to give as well as I can, (in order to testify my grateful remembrance of him, and desires to instruct my self and you—;) a Summary Account of him, in some Hints of his Piety and Fidelity.

HE was indeed a Godly Man, and Faithful Minister of Jesus Christ. I won't say, He was

the Reverend Mr. Thomas Symmes. 15

a Man of an Unenvied and Unasperfed Character; He was too good and faithful a Man, to pafs thro' the World without being evil fpoken of; his Eminency provoked Satan and fome of his Instruments, the more to envy and asperfe Him; and a Man of his quick Temper, and cheerful Conftitution, is fometimes the more expofed to Cenfure. However, We have reafon to efteem him very highly in love for his work's fake.

HE was obferved by fome of his Friends and Acquaintance that knew him beft in his Minority, to be a very hopeful and pious Youth. Sometime while he went to School, I am informed, He performed the part of a Chaplain in his Sifter's Family, and difcovered an uncommon Gift in Prayer; and while he was at College, befide his very good proficiency and promifing Excellency in humane Literature; He was obferved for his real Piety. His Prefident, the late Venerable Dr. Increase Mather †, hath given this Testimony of him, "I have my felf known him from his Youth. When he refided at the College, I obferved Real Piety in him, and was then perfuaded that the Lord would make him a Bleffing."

AND as for the latter and beft part of his Life, You are Witneffes of his Piety and Faithfulnefs. His publick Prayers (as far as we can judge) fhewed him to be a very Godly Man. He had not only an excellent Gift in Prayer, in chufing out Words, and readily fuiting himfelf to particular Occafions and Emergencies, but he fhewed great

† In his Preface to Mr. Symmes's Monitor to Delaying Sinners.

Compassion, in remembring and representing the *Cases of Others*, and *pleading with God for them*: —shewed much of the *Grace and Spirit of Prayer*: —manifested great *Humility and Reverence in the Duty*: he used no canting Tone, nor loudness of *Voice*, in Prayer, by which some are ready to measure Men's Devotion and Affection; but he chose rather to shew his Reverence and Submissness, in a calm and deliberate Utterance: Considering that God was in Heaven and he on Earth, therefore his Words were few, his Sentences short, and he was not hasty to utter any thing before God. Yet he shewed great *Fervency in pleading with God*, and filled his Mouth with Arguments. He prayed also with great *Importunity*, in giving himself unto Prayer; witness the many Fasts he kept with You; *wrestling with God*, and not letting him go, without a Blessing.

IN his *Preaching*, where he stood in God's stead, he endeavoured to speak and exhort with all *Authority*, and to *magnify his Office*. Here, his Elocution was quite different from That in Prayer; He lifted up his Voice like a Trumpet, (as loud sometimes, as pleasantly and artfully) and opened his mouth boldly as he ought to speak; and full of Love, Compassion, Joy, Sorrow, Moderation, Zeal, as the matter required; He could exceedingly to the Life express, and almost raise in Others, any Passion whatever. And though I don't apply to him, what was said of his great Lord and Master, *Never Man spake like him*; yet I believe he might say after Christ in another case, *The Zeal of thine House bath eaten me up*.

HIS Piety shewed it self also, in his great Devotion, and extraordinary Delight in *Singing God's Praises*; and taking pains to reform this part of Worship. — Though Some may ignorantly look upon what he did in this matter, as a Blemish in his Character, I am far from thinking so; but believe (as All in charity are bound to believe, from what He has publicly declared) that He therein aimed to do God Service; and therein his End is in a great measure answered.

IN his Family he exercised himself unto Godliness, by reading the Scriptures, by Prayer, and by Singing Psalms, at least in the latter part of his Life; and Sometimes by *expounding* the Scriptures in imitation of Mr. Philip Henry. — And by Catechising his Children.

BUT his *Fidelity*, accompanying his Piety, I think, very much distinguished Him; his improving well his Time, and all his Talents, which were very great.

AS far as I can Learn, He endeavoured to be truly *faithful* in all Relations. He was a Faithful Friend; and faithful even to his Enemies, by praying for them in an uncommon manner in their calamities*. And was as *ready* and *heartly* in Forgiving, as ever he was *Quick* in Resenting any real or supposed Injury.

BE

* In the Divisions at H——l, as I am informed, when some were so unhappily prejudiced against Him, that He could do no good for them by his Advice, which they very much needed: He desired his Friends with him to set apart some time every Morning to *pray* for them, till their Troubles were ended.

BE sure he was very true and Faithful to his Brethren in the Ministry : very Candid, Familiar, ready to *advise, encourage and enliven* them in their Work ; always forward to lead in and promote any good Designs.

AND I believe You can bear me witness, and indeed inform *me* better than I *You*, of his Faithfulness in his *Ministry*. He diligently attended *all Parts* of his Ministry ; by giving himself to *Reading* in his Study, and *publick Reading* the holy Scriptures, which after the practice of his Father, your former excellent and venerable Pastor ; and also according to the N. E. Confession of Faith†, he esteemed a part of Divine Worship ; *Preaching* the Word in Season and out of Season ; *Prayer, Catechising, Administration* of the Sacraments, and *Ecclesiastical Discipline*.

AND He took abundance of *pains*, You know, in all these parts of his Office, I believe it may be said of Him, that He did not any of his work deceitfully. I have some times wondred at his *unwearied Diligence and Industry* ; *studying early and late, preaching with all his might* ; with all *Longsuffering and Doctrine*. Let Sinners here witness if he did not *faithfully warn and intreat* them—— ; and Saints, if he did not counsel, encourage and quicken them abundantly from this Desk ; I believe he shun'd not to declare the whole Counsel of God. Let Scandalous Persons witness, if he has not *faithfully* reprov'd them, in private, for their disorderly walking. Let such as have been Sick and Disconsolate witness, if he

has

has not been very cordial and faithful, in directing and comforting them in Trouble.— He took no little pains in Catechising; and Labour'd abundantly to Rule well, revive and carry on Church-Discipline; and bewail'd that he could do no more this way, because of Peoples backwardness to bear Testimony against Offenders.

AND He took all Opportunities of doing Good. Witness the Young Mens Meetings, and other private Meetings; publick Lectures, and Church-Meetings before the Sacrament; his Pastoral Visits, and desiring his young People to visit Him at his own House, where he has industriously examined them by turns from Morning to Night; and his Occasional Converse, which as it was commonly brisk and cheerful, so also was entertaining and profitable, and very communicative, and seldom without some religious turns and hints. And I know he was heartily disposed to Liberality and works of Charity. Indeed he was generally behind-hand in the World, which forced him to do the less this way; but was very free of what he had, and given to Hospitality.

HE studied to approve himself to God. And such was his Fidelity, (so I call it, and so he thought it to be,) that he chose to displease Men, rather than not discharge a good Conscience. He was some times so Plain, Resolute and Severe in prosecuting what he was perswaded was the Cause of God, that he often incurr'd the displeasure of some Men; and expos'd himself to Reviling and Censure; but he told me, He “believed he “could, if he were so minded, easily have kept “in with his People, as well as the most peace-
“able

“able Minister in the Country, if he would only
 “preach general Truths, and not touch them in
 “a tender part; but, for his part, he could not
 “think himself faithful in so doing.

BUT, however he might appear to some, who are so ingrateful and censorious, as to mark only a Man's failings, and Imprudences, and always harp upon them; Yet the Account which he kept of his *secret Walk* with God, shews him to have been a very sincere Christian, as well as faithful Minister. That he was much given to Prayer; so much as one omission of *secret Prayer* had a sorrowful remembrance †. At stated Seasons he kept days of Prayer in secret, and was always very particular and solemn in *Preparation* for the Sacrament, examining his Evidences, Desires, Wants, and making his Vows. He made *Examination* his daily task; observed his Mis-carriages, lamented his Passionateness, was always thankful for the Restraints of Divine Grace; observed his *Experiences* in communion with God, *Assistances* in Duty, and gave praise for them; and at other times would lament and humble himself, when he was *straitned* and denied such Assistance. These *Hints* may put us in mind, and prove to us, that He was a Godly and Faithful Man.

FURTHERMORE, Remember what He has Done. Has he not done good? has not God witnessed to his Sincerity, in owning his Labours? han't we reason to think, that he obtained Good for us by his Prayers? and that God hath made his

† See the *Account* annexed to this Discourse.

his Ministry very serviceable? Be sure, The Church hath been greatly enlarged under it: He admitted to the Lord's Table in 17 Years time, upwards of 230 Persons in this small Town. Besure he has laid in a good stock of Prayers for You; He has taught you a great deal of sound Doctrine; left you a great deal of good Counsel, and faithful Warning; and has left us a very good Example. Besides what hath been mentioned, there is one thing more remarkable, to wit, his Humility towards God, in recording in his Diary and Church Book, praise to God alone, for all his Experiences, Assistances and Successes, saying, *To God be all the Glory: Not I, but the Grace of God.* And I have observed his Humility in preferring Others to Himself; and his Juniors have been often ashamed, by his asking their Advice in cases of Difficulty he was concerned in.

Finally, WE have good reason to conclude, (which is the greatest matter of Comfort under so sorrowful a Bereavement,) that as a Godly Man, who was found Faithful, he obtained Mercy of the Lord in a dying Hour. As he had often very happy Experiences in his Life, so he had most comfortable Hopes in Sicknes; was not afraid to Dy. He told me he had "often thought, "that he could as freely Dy, as ever he did any "thing in his Life, to get rid of Sin." He was very humble under a sense of his Sinfulness and Unprofitableness; desired that he might live to do better, as he resolved and hoped he should in every Relation. However, was very much resigned to God's Will, which was the last thing he intimated to any of us. He was once under
D Clouds

Clouds in his Sickness, but they soon scattered; and he enjoyed great Serenity of Soul. He could not say much; the most that I heard him say was in reckoning up with a most *rational* and *steady* Faith, his Evidences for Heaven; which, for fear I should be too tedious, I must forbear mentioning here ||.

THUS Lived and thus Died, this Godly and Faithful Man. And We could have been glad (at least some of Us,) to have enjoyed Him longer; but seeing that must not be, We must get what Good We can by his Death: Many of Us could have wished to have heard more from him in his Sickness, but we deserved it not, for hearkening no more to him in the time of his Health. He was then able and forward enough to speak to us:— We must now remember his *former* Counsels and Exhortations, and if we did not follow them Then, do it Now. And particularly recollect the Instructions You have received from Him, proper to your present Condition; and endeavour to govern Your selves, as you can imagine Your Pastor would advise you, could he speak to you from the Dead.

Secondly, LET us be thankful to Heaven, that there ever was such a Man sent to us; Bless God for his Abilities, and Christian Attainments; and that he obtained Mercy to be *faithful*, and was Instrumental of doing so much Good as he did; in increasing so wonderfully as he did the Church

|| See the following Account latter End,

Church here at *Bradford*. He needs not any of our Praises, 'tis not for that End that I have said any thing of him; but God deserves Praise for him: Let Us do as He did, in ascribing unto God *all the Glory*.

Thirdly. FROM this let us learn our own Frailty and danger of sudden Death. He was accounted a strong hail Man, and yet how did Sicknes, and no violent Sicknes neither, consume his Life! Within ten Days before his Death, he was in the Pulpit preaching to You. Lord! *make Us to know our End, and the measure of our Days, what it is, and how frail we are:* If this be done in the Green Tree, what shall become of the Dry? If Death so easily conquer strong Men, what may poor crazy Bodies expect? If Death makes such work with godly and faithful Men, what will become of poor worthless Sinners, that are nothing but Cumberers of the Ground?

LET us consider our danger of dying suddenly, and dying in our Sins, or having our Work to do when Sicknes comes. We have Warning of it from Him who is now dead. He earnestly advised, "that all would forthwith prepare for Death, because 'tis a Work that must be done or they undone." He was more sensible than ever of the Difficulty of doing it on a Sick Bed. Indeed he had it not to do then; He had Peace, he said, "worth ten thousand Worlds." Affliction did not much distress, but greatly better'd his Soul. O let Us endeavour to *Imitate* Him, follow his Faith, considering the End of his Conversation.

OTHER WISE, We are in danger of further and worse Judgments. It looks as if we were ripening for those Judgments which the Death of the Godly is sometimes a Prefage of, that That Scripture is fulfilling in our Ears, *That the Righteous is taken away from the Evil to come †.* That it is thus sometimes, is certain; and when is it more likely to be so, than when Godly Men are taken away in the midst of their Serviceableness; when they were as capable as ever of doing Good, before they come to be enfeebled by old Age? And nothing can prevent the sad Omen, but our Repentance and turning unto Him that smiteth us; and obeying the Voice of the Word and Rod; earnestly seeking unto God to Save and Help us. And this brings me to the Second Part of my Discourse, *viz.*

II. WHEN it is so, *that the Godly Man ceaseth &c.* it becomes and greatly concerns Us, to apply our selves the more earnestly unto God for Help. Help, Lord. The Word Help, according to the Original, is largely used in Scripture; "signifying all manner of saving, helping, delivering and preserving. To Save from Adversity, *Psal.* XXXIV. 7. To Save from Sin, *Mat.* I. 21. and to save from Wrath, *Rom.* V. 9 *.

I. INDEED We should always seek to God for Help, in case Godly and Faithful Men did not fail; *Jer.* XVII. 5. *Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the Man that trusteth in Man, and maketh Flesh his Arm,*

Arm, and whose Heart departeth from the Lord. The most Godly and Faithful Men can help us but little; nay, scarce any thing at all of themselves alone. They can't save us from Sin, from Sickness, nor from Wrath: If we don't seek unto God, 'tis in vain to depend on Men to Help; they shall only deliver their own Souls by their Righteousness. But however,

2. **GODLY** and Faithful Men, while they live in Health and Strength, and have the Presence of God with them, are great Helps and Blessings among the Children of Men. *Moses* of old was a great Help to save *Israel* from being destroyed many a time; so was *Joshua* and the Judges, *Jephthah* and *Gideon* and *Sampson*, &c. and afterwards, under the Captivity, *Zerubbabel*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, &c. of whom we read, in the Prophecy of *Obadiah*, v. 21. *And Saviours shall come upon Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Esau, and the Kingdom shall be the Lord's.* Good Men are many times Instrumental Saviours.

(1.) **THEY** help to save Men from Sin. They are some *Refrain* by their Authority; a *Guide* to Men in the right Way, by their Instruction, Counsel, Example, &c. Thus *Jeboiada*, while he lived, was a great Help to King *Joash*, and a means to preserve the Kingdom in good Order.

(2.) **THEY** help to keep off Judgments. As in likelihood *Lot* did from *Sodom*; and we know *Moses* did from *Israel*; He stood in the Gap and made Intercession for *Israel* many a time, and
God

God turned away his Wrath. For the sake of good *Josiah* God deferred bringing Evil on *Judah*, which He intended †.

(3.) **THEY** help to fetch down Blessings Temporal and Spiritual. *Jam. V. 16.*— *The effectual fervent Prayer of a Righteous Man availeth much. Elijah obtained Rain by his Prayer, Elisha the Shunamite's Son. The Elders of the Church are to pray with the Sick, and the Prayer of Faith shall Save the Sick. Jam. V. 14, 15.*

THEY are Means of deriving to us Spiritual Blessings; such as Pardon, Restraining, Converting, Quickning and Comforting Grace. *Moses obtained Pardon for Israel; Job Peace with God for his Friends. Christians are directed to pray one for another, with this Encouragement of Converting a Sinner from the error of his ways. Jam. V. 16, 19, 20.*

3. **WHEN** such Men fail, we have the greater need to go to God for Help; so *David* did in our Text. But,

2. **HOW** must we go to God for Help?

A. 1. BY Repentance and Faith: else we shall have no Help from God; but he will punish us seven times more for our Sins. Whereas if we return to Him, He will return to us, if we believe in Him through Christ, we shall be saved; if not by Men as Instruments, yet, which is better, God can make up the loss of humane Helps by his Presence.

2. **BY**

* 2 King. 22, 19, 20.

2. BY Prayer. This Course the Text directs us to. And the Light of Nature teacheth in all Affliction and Distress to pray unto God for Help. — Thus the Psalmist resolves in a like case; Psal. LVII. 2. *I will cry unto God most High, unto God, that performeth all things for me.* In this case therefore We should pray,

(1.) THAT God would help us to bear, and Sanctify to Us, our Loss, in the Death of Godly and Faithful Men: 'Tis his Prerogative and Promise to teach us to profit, Isa. XLVIII. 17. which should oblige and encourage us to go to Him.

(2.) THAT He would repair the Breaches —. — Raise up and quicken Others, or help Us to fill the Places of the Godly Deceased; That instead of the Fathers may be the Children; that “instead of our Elijah’s” which were the Chariots of Israel and the Horsemen thereof, there may be (when They are gone to Heaven) “Elisha’s raised up “in their stead.”

(3.) THAT God would Help by his Special Presence and the more immediate Influences of his Spirit. — Though our best Men are taken off, We must not be Discouraged, but Enquire early after God. — *Where is the Lord God of Elijah? — Where is He that brought them up out of the Sea with the Shepherd of his Flock? Where is He that put his holy Spirit within Him? Isa. LXIII. 11.*

A P P L I C A T I O N.

I. LET us repent of all our Sins, which have had a hand in taking away the Godly from Us; and fly to the Blood of Christ for Pardon. Let us Repent of

of our Unthankfulness for Christ's faithful Ministers; of our Slighting, Despising, Disobeying, Reproaching Them. Let us Repent of all our Unprofitableness under the Ministry — : 'tis high time to bewail it when We see the Means and most excellent Helps taken away. The Godly Deceased Ministers, that used earnestly to preach the Doctrine of Repentance, shall preach it no more; but Providence loudly calls upon Us by their Death to Repent and make our Peace with God, by Faith in Christ; before *We Dy* also, that Iniquity may not be our Ruine.

II. LET us earnestly *Pray for Divine Help*, under the present sorrowful Dispensation and Bereavement.

1. THAT God would help the Family of his Dear Servant Deceased, under *Their* fore Bereavement. That God would remember his Covenant for Them; — and not suffer His Faithfulness to fail; that He would be the Father of the Fatherless and the God of the Widow; That the Generation of the Upright may be blessed; That as, We have seen, the Righteous hath not been forsaken; so We may not see his Seed begging Bread.

2. SUFFER me to Exhort You my Brethren of this Church and Congregation, to be much in prayer to God, to Help You under Your awful Bereavement. Surely 'tis a Time for Prayer with You, wherein God expects that You should humble Your selves, Seek his face and turn from every evil way. Be persuaded then to Humble your selves under the mighty Hand of God: and Repent, lest He come quickly and remove the Candlestick also out of his

his place. And Pray that He would not leave his Sanctuary desolate ; That though now He hath smitten the Shepherd, the Sheep may still be preserved from scattering abroad. Pray the Lord of the Harvest (and you will do well to call in some Others, Godly and Faithful Men, to pray with and for you, unto God) that he wou'd Help you to another faithful Labourer. And be careful to seek unto the Lord, in a *Right Way*, for such another Gift ; which must be with great *Humiliation* *Solemn Fasting* and *heartly Repentance*; else Your Sins, which justify God in taking away your late Excellent Pastor, will provoke Him, not to give you another Pastor after his own Heart. — And with great *Union* and *fervent Supplication* : You had need be well agreed together to obtain such a Blessing of your Heavenly Father. *Behold How Good and how pleasant a thing it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity!* — *There the Lord commandeth the Blessing.* Psal. CXXXIII. 1, 3.

3. LET us pray God to Help *Surviving Ministers*, particularly Those in this *Neighbourhood* — That He would preserve Their Lives and Health : and make no more Breaches on the Flocks. That God would Help them to *realize* their own Frailty, as well as *preach* other Men's ; and *remember* They are but *Earthen Vessels*, easily broken. That God will Help them to follow the good *Example* of his Deceased Servant ; to redeem their Time ; take heed to Themselves and to Their Ministry ; that They may save Themselves and Those that hear them. And particularly that God would help *me*, who am one of the greatest sharers in this Loss, and give me a double Portion of his Spirit.

4. THAT God would Help the *Neighbouring Churches*, and the *whole Land*; to Improve this Providence aright; — That they may be *doubly* quickened to Improve thankfully the Means of Grace while They have them, and prepare for Death; namely from the consideration of their *Minister's Frailty*, and of *Their own Frailty*. —

AND now by way of Motive, consider

1. THAT God *can* succour, help and save Us, though our best Friends on Earth fail us. He can raise up Others — or do without them. The Residue of the Spirit is with Him. He that furnished *Mr. Symmes* and made him so rich a Blessing —, can help those that remain —; and provide another for poor *Bradford*. — And He can make this Grievous Stroke turn to our Salvation, That We may now remember and fear, and practice according to the Ministry of the Deceased, more than We did while We enjoyed it: And that We may get more Good by the Death of this Godly Minister, than ever We did by his Life.

2. IF We do thus Seek unto God, *He will help us*: will hear us in the day of Trouble, and the Name of the God of *Jacob* shall defend us; He will send us Help from the Sanctuary, and strengthen us out of Zion: will remember all our Offerings, and fulfil all our Petitions †. For *there is a River, the Streams whereof shall make glad the City of God: the holy Place of the Tabernacle of the most high. God is in the midst of her: she shall not be*

be moved; God shall help her, and that right early.
Pfal. XLVI. 4, 5. For he never said to the Seed
of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain a: But he hath said,
I will never leave thee nor forsake thee: so that we
may boldly say, the Lord is our Helper b; He hath
said, Humble your selves in the sight of the Lord, and
he shall lift you up c; He hath said, I will give you
Pastors according to mine Heart d, and has bid us
pray to the Lord of the Harvest e, for this End.
'Tis said, A Father of the Fatherless, and a Judge of
the Widows, is God in his holy Habitation f;— The
Generation of the Upright is blessed g; When Father and
Mother forsake them, then the Lord will take them
up h. Shall not we then be encouraged to pray
unto God? O let us stir up our selves to take
hold on Him; and find in our hearts to pray this
Prayer, particularly with David, in another case,
II Sam. VII. 25. and so on; with which I con-
clude; And now, O Lord God, the Word that thou
hast spoken concerning thy Servant, and concerning his
House, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said;
and let thy Name be magnified for ever, saying, The
LORD OF HOSTS IS GOD OVER ISRAEL:—
Thou hast promised this Goodness unto thy Servant:
Therefore now let it please thee to bless the House of
thy Servant, that it may continue for ever before thee:
for thou, O Lord, hast spoken it; and with thy Bles-
sing let the House of thy Servant be blessed for ever.
A M E N.

a Isa. 45. 19. *b* Heb. 13. 5, 6. *c* Jam. 4. 10. *d* Jer. 3. 15. *e* Mat. 9. 38. *f* Psal. 68. 5. *g* Psal. 112. 2. *h* Psal. 27. 10.

F I N I S.

the President of the United States

A circular ink stamp from the British Museum. The words "BRITISH" and "MUSEUM" are curved along the top and bottom edges respectively. In the center, the date "9 MY 72" is stamped horizontally.



1908

A Particular Plain and Brief
Memorative Account
Of the Reverend
Mr. Thomas Symmes.

BEING

An Illustration of what is said of Him
in the foregoing SERMON; and
also containing some other Parts of
his

CHARACTER.

Chiefly taken

From his own Sayings and Writings,
particularly his *Diary* and *Church-Re-*
ords.

To which is added,

His ADVICE to his *Children*, to his *Servants*,
and to his *People*; — particularly as to
his Successor in the Work of the Ministry.

B O S T O N: Printed by *T. Fleet*, for *S.*
Gerrish in Cornhil. 1726,

A Particular View and Plan of

Memorative Account

A True and Faithful Account of the

Life and Death of

Mr. Thomas

of the Parish of St. Andrew, in the County of Middlesex, who died on the 10th of June 1741, at the Age of 70 Years.



By Thomas, Son of the said Mr. Thomas, now living in the Parish of St. Andrew, in the County of Middlesex.

Printed by J. Smith, at the Sign of the Sun, in St. Andrew's Church, in the Parish of St. Andrew, in the County of Middlesex.

1741

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A Plain Memorative ACCOUNT
Of the Reverend
Mr. *Thomas Symmes*.

CHAP. I.
His Birth and Descent.

MR. *Thomas Symmes* was born at *Bradford* Feb. 1. 1677--8. The Son of the Reverend Mr. *Zechariah Symmes*, who was the first Minister of the Gospel that settled at *Bradford*. His Grand-Father (whose Name also was *Zechariah*) "was above 40 Years the Pastor of the Church in *Charlestown*;" whose Life is mentioned in Dr. *C. Mather's History of New-England*. His Great-Grand-father, Mr. *William Symmes* was ordained a Minister in the Famous Year 1588".* He was endowed and adorned with a Healthy Constitution; a Comely and Lively Countenance and Complexion; a very cheerful, free, affable, generous

* *Dr. I. Mather's Preface to one of Mr. Symmes's Sermons.*

nerous and courteous Spirit and Disposition; a very handsome genteel Air and Deportment; which rendred his Company and Conversation pleasant and entertaining. But withal he had a quick and hasty Temper, which some too far improved to slur his other Excellencies; though to him 'twas matter of continual Conflict, as may been seen afterwards, and indeed serv'd to exercise and illustrate his good Nature and Grace.

C H A P. II.

His Education.

HE had the chief of his School-Learning, as I'm informed, (after some Instruction in the Latin Tongue, by his Father,) at *Charlestown*, under the Famous Master *Emerson*, who was afterwards School-master at *Salem*; where I think He ended his Days: And by his indefatigable Industry and Sprightliness was fitted for the College in less than two Years time: And was admitted there, 1694: in the 17th. Year of his Age; under the Tuition of Mr. *Leverett*, who was since President of *Harvard College*, now Deceased.

I think by the help of Benefactors (Mr. *Brattle* in particular) who among other things favoured Him with the Butlership a great while; He had the Advantage and Opportunity of Continuing at College, till two Years after He had taken his Second Degree.

And as far as I can learn He was an Ornament to the College; Discovering a Studious Mind, and very considerable Brightness and Penetrati-

on of Soul, and a Religious Disposition, withal ; evident not only to his President, as was noted in the Sermon preceeding — ; But his own Familiar Acquaintance have acknowledged it in Him —. He made a Polite Orator ; had a Quick Talent at Disputation ; And need not have been ashamed to Vie with the Greatest Disputants of the College.

C H A P. III.

His Settlement in the Ministry.

AT 25 Years of Age He began to Preach ; but often complain'd that He began too soon. Quickly after which, (I Suppose) He was Invited to *Boxford* ; And in the Year 1702. December 30. was Ordain'd to the Pastoral Office there, the first Minister of the Gospel in that Town. And during his Ministry there, 72 Persons were admitted to the Lord's Table, besides the Church that was first gathered, and many Others afterwards dismiss'd from other Churches. A considerable Number likewise were brought to own the Covenant, and so intitled to Baptism for their Children, according to the Result of the *Synod* in 1662. But meeting at length with such uncommon Difficulties as He was not able to encounter, and seeing no comfortable Prospect of Escaping them, so long as He continued there ; Sometime in the Year 1706 (as I find by his Paper. He was "thoughtful of removing from *Boxford*. However He was not peremtory, but willing to be at God's Disposal, and to be directed by

E

Him,

Him, and desirous chiefly to advance his Glory, as appears by this Passage in his Diary; —

“Jan. 29. 1706--7. This Day I had sweet Communion with God in Secret Prayer. The Lord helped me wonderfully to plead with his Majesty, for Assurance, for a soft Heart, and for his Holy Spirit, to sanctify me, comfort me, guide and assist me; and for his Presence to be with me, whether I remove from *Boxford* or not. I pleaded, Lord, If thy Presence go not with me, carry me not hence. Lord, I can’t go, unless Thou go with me. Lord, If thou wilt not go with me, stop me, disappoint me, Hedge up my Way with Thorns; Yea, let me Dy, rather than go one Step without Thee. Lord! If it be not for thy Glory, and for the Good of Souls, —let me be here continued: I know that Thou art Allsufficient, and canst provide for me here; and deliver me from my Temptations here; and therefore I will wait upon Thee in the use of lawful Means, to know what thy Will is. Lord, help me so to do, &c. After this, as I am informed, he obtained the Consent of his Church and Town, and had the Advice of the Neighbouring Elders, to remove. And the People at *Bradford* then invited him to succeed his Father (who died about this time, April, 1708.) in the Ministry there; whither he was removed and installed in the Pastoral Office, sometime in the Year 1708. where he spent the rest of his Life.

CHAP. IV.

His Marriages, Family, &c.

HE first married——Mrs. *Elizabeth Blowers* of Cambridge; Sister to the Reverend Mr. *Thomas Blowers* of Beverly. By her God was pleased to build up his Family, giving him Seven very hopeful and desirable Children; one of whom died young, the other Six are still alive, Four Sons and Two Daughters: The Eldest Daughter, the Reverend Mr. *Wadsworth*, now President of Harvard College, in Cambridge, hath taken into his Family, since her Father's Death, whom God reward for his Charity. The Mother of these Children was taken from Them by Death April. 6. 1714. Mr. Symmes was married again March 28. 1715, to Mrs. *Haymab Pike*, Daughter of the Reverend Mr. *John Pike* of Dover: by whom He had Two very desirable Daughters now surviving. Near the time of her Delivery of a Third Child, (before She was Delivered) Her Soul Departed like *Rachel's*; Feb. 1. 1718--19. Afterwards he was married the Third Time,——to Mrs. *Eleanor Moody*, Relict of the late Mr. *Elihu Moody* of Dedbam, Daughter to the well known Mr. *Benjamin Thompson* of Brantree, who now survives under a second Widowhood.

It may be wondred at, and bewailed by Some, that this Excellent Person, A Minister of the Fourth Generation, in an uninterrupted Line, should bring up None of his Sons to inherit his Learning, and Succeed him in the Ministry. It

A Plain Memorative Account

was not, as is well known, for want of a very great Value for These Things; — but a principal Reason was a want of Estate sufficient; for though He had as good a Maintenance as most Other Ministers in the Country; yet he could not (and no other Minister in the Country can, whatever some may think) bring up a Son at the College, besides suitably maintaining his Family, with 100 *l.* per Annum, (paid in our Province-Bills, as they now run) without having some other Income, or neglecting his Studies and Ministry more than he did. However, he was not without Thoughts, of late Years, to endeavour it for his youngest Son; but 'tis fear'd, it must now fail, unless some Benefactors may be rais'd up.

CHAP. V.

His Learning.

HE was a Man of very quick and strong Intellectual Powers, had a considerable large Library of his Father's and Grandfather's; was very Studious as well as Pious, and very much disinclined from the Cares of the World; and therefore must needs arrive to considerable Learning. He was indeed under some Disadvantages for it, by reason that his Books were mostly old; and his Circumstances of Life for a great while low and difficult, which was very contrary to a Man of his Generous Disposition, and had a tendency to cramp his Genius, and in some measure detain him from going abroad, to receive the Advantage of a Learned Conversation. —

tion. — But notwithstanding, he retained his College Learning very well, insomuch that he has sometimes at his Family-Worship, read out of the *Hebrew Bible* into *English* very currently, and undertook a few Years since to Tutor two Junior *Sophisters* from the College: — and used commonly once a Year, to go over the Liberal Arts and Sciences. And being a great Reader, by borrowing Books, he got acquainted with the most considerable modern Authors in History and Divinity.

CHAP. VI.

His Principles.

IN the grand Articles of reveal'd Religion, his Principles were *Calvinistical*. Though, I have heard him say, That, in his younger Time, while a Student at the College, he was more in favour with the human and lax Principles of the *Arminians*; But afterwards, when he came to be more settled in his Studies, and experienced in Christianity, he grew very stanch in the Doctrines of Original Sin, Grace and Predestination, Justification by Faith, through CHRIST's Righteousness imputed, perseverance of the Saints, &c. In *Circumstantials*, and Matters of Indifferency, he was not at all precise; He neither confined his Charity to those of his own Perswasion, nor yet extended it to such as destroy the main Articles of the Christian Faith, or live in gross Immoralities. In *Church-Government* his Principles were *Congregational*, according to Dr. Owen, whom

whom he called the *Atlas* of Congregationalism; and according to Mr. Richard Mather's Explanation of N. E. Platform, (published by his Son Dr. Increase Mather,) who had a principal Hand in drawing up the Platform. 'Twas a Principle with him, that all Acts of Church Government should be done *Consentiente Plebe*. He was very much for Order and Union among the Churches, and standing by their present Constitution, at least until they could agree upon a Better. And though he was of Opinion, that the Platform was not, in all respects, a sufficient Plan, considering the present State of the Churches, and wished for a Reformation in some things; yet "he highly disliked that Apostacy which some
 "in N. E. have been guilty of, in departing
 "from the Profession which they once made;
 "And though he was not perhaps so forward
 "as some at first, to condemn them, so as to
 "look on them as Men utterly forsaken of God;
 "Yet he was through their Fall, (afterwards,)
 "established more firmly in the Principles of
 "Presbyterian Ordination and Government, in
 "opposition to Diocesan Episcopacy, and also
 "in opposition to the established Ceremonies of
 "the Church of England; and heartily wished for
 "their Repentance.

CHAP. VII.

His Religion or Piety.

I Shall nextly give the Reader some Account of his Religion and exemplary Piety. As for

for the publick Testimonials of it, I refer you to the foregoing Sermon; but for his private Devotion and Walk with God, I shall here have recourse to his Diary. And,

Sect. 1. I shall relate some Instances of his *Daily Devotion in Secret*. He was very Constant and Conscientious in the Duty of *Secret Prayer*; as I gather from One passage in his Diary shewing what sorrowful Reflection he had for once omitting of it. "I omitted Secret Prayer in the Morning; I would be sorry for it; though I lifted up my Heart in Ejaculation, yet I did not make a set Prayer."—He used this together with private Reading the Scriptures, as an eminent means to preserve him from Temptation. Once when he had grievously fallen into some Sin, he remarks upon it, "N. B. I neglected to Read in Private in the Morning, and was Perfunctory in my secret Devotions." But he was commonly very Devout and Fervent herein; and, to use his own expression, "Prayed in his Prayers;" used to wrestle and plead with God, and fill his Mouth with Arguments, and to look after his Prayers; and recorded some of them, to see how he prevailed. And often met with comfort and sometimes Assurance in the Duty. For Instance; Once, says he, "I found much comfort & encouragement in pleading the Covenant with God, Urging the Stock of Prayers laid up for me by my Godly Ancestors: O that all the Children of Godly Parents would practice this more. My Children, If ever this Book fall into your Hands, I charge you to take notice of this and Act accordingly! O don't neglect it, my Dear Children!"

dren! You are Children of many Prayers:
 but don't trust to That, but pray for your selves,
 and look upon That as an Encouragement so
 to Do." At another Time ——" I hope I
 met with God in Prayer. God helped me in
 renewing my Acceptance of Christ; I pleaded
 with Christ that I had nothing to bring along
 with me, not a Tear, not a Sigh, not a Word,
 not a Thought that was really good, which
 wonderfully affected me. I pleaded with God
 Jer. 3. 1. *And Yet return unto Me, saith the Lord.*
 and I found great Comfort in it. I pleaded
 with Christ to be my King, to rule my Heart
 and all my Senses and Members, and Faculties
 and Passions of my Soul. I pleaded with Christ
 to come and dwell in my Heart, acknowledging
 that it was Dirty and Filthy, but if He would
 he cou'd cleanse it.— At another Time says he,
 I pleaded with God that Promise, *They shall be*
filled. I pleaded that God had given me an
 Appetite after Spiritual Things; that God
 knew I valued Grace above all the World; and
 therefore prayed he would fill me full of
 Knowledge, Faith, Love, &c. Yea, with all
 the Fulness of God." Once more he writes,—
 This Morning it pleased God of his infinite
 Mercy, and rich Grace, to give a good mea-
 sure of Assurance in Prayer to him. I was
 assured, and am, that I desire to be the Servant
 of God, to Love him and Fear him. I was
 brought to be able to say, *I am thy Servant,*
the Son of thine Handmaid, thou hast loosed my
Bonds. I was enabled also to say, *I will hum-*
bly represent my Condition to thee, and leave it with
thee,

"thee, to deal with me as thou wilt in time——
 "Glorify thy self in me and by me—— Let me trust
 "in the Lord—— I am persuaded with the Apo-
 "stle, Rom. 8. ult.

On this wise did he not only *statedly* Morn-
 ing and Evening, and sometimes thrice a Day,
 visit the Throne of Grace; but at many other
 times *occasionally*; sometimes with a dear Friend,
 and sometimes arose in the *Night* and prayed;
 besides frequent Ejaculations, lying down and
 rising up.

Besides this he daily practiced *Self Examination*,
 which he engaged himself to by a Vow, accord-
 ing to Mr. *J. Alliene's* Direction, in a Discourse
 from Deut. 32. 46. in his Remains. He
 resolved also every Evening to consider what E-
 vidences he had of his good Estate, Some of which
 I shall here transcribe. —— "This Evening I
 "could see no Evidence clearer, than my being
 "poor in Spirit. I think God has shown me that I
 "am nothing, have nothing, can do nothing, de-
 "serve nothing but Hell, and that I have deserv-
 "ed times without number." The next Day.
 "My Evidence. I Desire to fear God's Name, so
 "far as I know my own heart. (which I had need
 "always put in, for my Heart is very deceitful.)
 Again. "My Evidence last night. That I have
 "an heart to forgive such as injure me". Again,
 says he, "My Evidence I gather from those words,
 "I will put Enmity between thy Seed and her Seed.
 "I hope God has slain the Enmity, naturally in
 "me against his People, and that I love all such
 "as have God's Image, with a pure heart fervent-
 "ly, and even such as through mistake are my

"Personal Enemies." At another time he
 writes, "I met with Encouragement from Mr.
 "Baxter's REST, his Description of Justifying
 "Faith; That it is *An Affectionate Receiving of*
 "Christ as Lord and Saviour. I am persuaded that
 "I so do; and that I am willing to part with all sin,
 "this he says is a certain mark. Sometimes his
 Evidences were mixed with clouds, saying "I am
 "strangely unstedfast, much haunted with vain
 "Thoughts, afraid I don't grow in Grace but ra-
 "ther languish, LORD revive and quicken me.
 "I have neglected to consider what Evidence in
 "the Evening, I must attend That. I cannot do
 "what I would. No, no, no, that I can't, God
 "know. Lord, how would I live, how holily,
 "how humbly! Lord Jesus, thou knowest! —
 "I bless God, I hope my own Iniquity is in some
 "measure mortified. I must say, God is Good. I
 "must say, I Love God with all my Heart, and
 "love him for his Holiness, so far as I know any
 "thing of my self, and shou'd rejoice more than
 "in the time when Corn and Wine increase,
 "might I never sin more." And Sometimes he
 was under Greater Fears, and very much in the
 Dark. — "I am afraid all things are not right
 "between God and me, because I fall so often in-
 "to Sin; Iniquities prevail against me." "I have
 "no clear Evidence of my Interest in Christ,
 "am much in the Dark. The Word does not do
 "me Good I fear; does not work effectually in
 "me. I fear whether there is a Spark of Grace
 "in me, I fall so often & foully into the same Sin.
 "O miserable Man that I am, what shall I do to
 "be saved!" But his Sins made him the more
 humble,

humble, put him upon crying more earnestly unto God. — “O Lord, I am the *Chief* of Sinners, my Heart hard; but I will never cease crying to the Lord till He give me a soft Heart, till He take away my stony Heart, and give me an heart of flesh.” “If ever I get to Heaven I shall be the very greatest Instance of Divine Mercy that ever came thither. O wretched Man that I am, Who shall deliver me from the body of this Death? Lord Jesus, I hope Thou wilt do it.”

He was Often very Thankful for Restraining Grace, and Lamented his Falls, and particularly the Hastiness of his Temper, Saying, “I have cause to be humbled for the heat of my Spirit; I am too passionate. I need to think oftener of those words, *Slow to Speak, slow to Wrath*. I greatly transgress that Law. O wretched Man that I am.” — Sometimes he notes, “I sat too long in Company, fear I was not Grave enough,” &c. — These are Instances of his ordinary *daily* Devotion and Piety in secret.

Seet. 2. I shall Instance in some of his Secret Preparations for the Lord's Table; which were very Solemn, and full of exemplary and experimental Piety: And he having recorded many of them to observe his own progress,— I shall transcribe some for the Help and Imitation of others.

ONCE he writes thus. “I find by woful Experience, a Person had need be peculiarly watchful when call'd to special Ordinances. I am now invited to a Feast; I am utterly unworthy of such an Honour as to sit with the King Heaven at his Table. But since I am invited,

“ and infinitely need to come, it would be the
 “ greatest folly for me to compliment my self out
 “ of Happiness. Nay, I am Commanded to
 “ come, and that’s a sufficient Warrant for my
 “ coming, tho’ I see I deserve no such Favour, yet
 “ surely I shall not be blamed for Doing as I’m
 “ bid ; No, there’s no Danger There ; Here’s all
 “ the Hazard, I shan’t come as I *shou’d* do ; And
 “ then tho’ I ben’t condemned for doing my Du-
 “ ty, yet I shall for not Doing it as I ought. But
 “ now, Alas ! how shall I poor, weak, sinful
 “ Worm, be able to draw near to God aright ? I
 “ can do nothing of my Self, and I have forfeited
 “ the Favour of God, don’t deserve He shou’d af-
 “ ford me the Assistance I need. ’Tis true, O
 “ my poor Soul, ’tis true : But yet the Mercy of
 “ God is free ; The Fountain opened is free as
 “ well as full : God would have me come empty,
 “ and then He will fill me ; He wou’d have me
 “ come hungry and thirsty, and then He’l satisfy
 “ me. O my Good God, create in me an Appe-
 “ tite to those costly, delicious Dainties, Thou
 “ dost invite me to feast upon, and give thy Bles-
 “ sing with Them ; that I may by them be nou-
 “ rished and strengthened, and further fitted to do
 “ and suffer thy holy Will in this world, and to
 “ enjoy Thee in the other and the better world.
 “ I have made little progress I fear in my Christi-
 “ an Course since the last Sacrament. But I have
 “ abundant reason to bless God for Restraining
 “ Grace — O that all Christians were sensible
 “ of their Engagements to God on that Account.”
 Then He mentions special Petitions — and
 Resolutions —

At another time, he writes. " Being Invited
 " to the Lords Table, I find my self in a very dead
 " and dull indisposed frame ; I am at a great loss
 " about my self, I can't go with Assurance, but I
 " desire to go for it ; I have a dark benighted for-
 " saken Soul; O that Christ would vouchsafe to
 " kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. I think I
 " can truly say, there is no Sin but I had rather
 " leave than live in. That I can heartily forgive
 " every Mortal that has any ways injured me, as
 " I desire to be forgiven. ——— I particularly
 " need power against rash Anger, and I desire to
 " go with strong expectations of receiving it. I
 " purpose to set my self to endeavour especially
 " the Mortification of rash Anger, to endeavour
 " in all cases to let my Yea be Yea, and my
 " Nay, Nay. "

At another ——— " I considered what war-
 " rant I have to go to the Sacrament, or what
 " reason I have to conclude that Jesus Christ in-
 " vites me to his Table. And the reasons are
 " such as these. 1. Christ Invites such as are his
 " Friends. *Eat O Friends* —. Now I hope I am a
 " Friend of the Bridegroom, because I Desire to
 " Do whatsoever he commands me. 2. He has
 " said, *Whosoever Will, let him come* — And I am
 " Willing; He has made me so in the Day of his
 " Power. 3. He has said, *Let him that is athirst*
 " *come,* — And I am athirst. Nothing will, no-
 " thing can, nothing shall satisfy me without
 " Christ. Christ I can be satisfied with, without
 " any thing else ; I hope, I desire it may be so.
 " 4. Christ has said, *Come all ye that are weary &c.*
 " and I am so ; Weary of all Sin, and desire free-
 " dom

dom from it above any outward Mercy, I trust.
 5. He hath said, *Let him that is Simple turn in
 hither, and as for him that hath no Understanding*
ing &c. I am Simple and want Understanding.
 He has shown this abundantly—I hope I grow
 in Grace, and have found it good to draw
 near to God. I then considered what I would
 and should go for; and if Christ should say,
Ask what I shall give thee? My Answer shall
 be, Thy, Self, Lord, and take me to be thine.
 He has all who has Him that has All. *Aug.*
 I desire to go with longing Desires, raised Ex-
 pectations, and fixed Resolutions to endeavour
 to live to God's Glory. I am freely willing
 to come under the strictest Obligations to Je-
 sus Christ.

Thus he used ordinarily to prepare himself,—
 and herein often found great Apprehensions of
 the Love of Christ. Once he neglected to pre-
 pare himself in such a manner; but observe how
 it fared with him. “I did not (says he) over-
 look my Experiences, nor spend the time in
 Preparation I have sometimes done, it being
 Lecture-Week, and my Wife taken ill this
 Week; so that I thought all the time I had,
 was little enough to prepare for the publick
 Exercise. But alas! I never had so little sen-
 sible experience of God's Presence in my Life;
 I never tasted so little Sweetness in Commu-
 nion with God. I had never, as I remember, so
 indistinct Apprehensions; never was more
 straitned: What shall I do? O I will by God's
 Grace, take more care to prepare my self for
 this Ordinance, and humbly beg of God to
 follow

“follow the Ordinance with his Blessing, for his
“free Mercy’s sake.” And, the next Sacrament
he writes, “I was very solicitous to get prepa-
“red for the Ordinance; and tho’ very defective
“therein, yet I had much of God’s Presence and
“Assistance, which I record to encourage to
“take Pains in preparatory Duties.

Sect. 3. I could give a very large Account of
his extraordinary Piety, in his secret *Fasting*. He
often kept Days of Prayer. Sometimes stated
once a Month; sometimes only Occasional: Be-
fore the Sacrament often; Under some Tempta-
tions from within, or Afflictions from without;
Under Reproach; To seek Direction in some
important Affair; implore some special Bles-
sings.—— And sometimes with one or two of
his dearest Friends; Sometimes with a Neigh-
bour of another Town; Oftentimes with his
Wife; (And after the same manner he kept Days
of Thanksgiving also.——) And this being a
thing so worthy of Imitation, and what ’tis to be
feared too many Christians are ignorant and un-
experienced in, I shall here set down one of his
Fast Exercises, (as he hath recorded it,) for their
Instruction and Imitation.

“*July 1. 1709.* I set apart this Day for So-
“lemn Prayer with Fasting. Began the Day,
“after reading a Chapter or two, with a Prayer
“for Preparation and Divine Assistance in the
“Duties before me. I then read several Authors
“for help in confessing my Sins; and spent the
“whole time in the next Prayer in Confession,
“of first, my Original Sin; then of my Actual
“Sins, of Commission, in the several Places I

“had

“ had lived, and Relations I have sustained;
 “ then of my Sins of Omission; then of my Sins
 “ against the Gospel, in particular; then of my
 “ Other Men’s Sins; and insisted particularly on
 “ those I have fallen into in special Hours of
 “ Temptation: And then acknowledged the Ag-
 “ gravations my Sins have been attended with,
 “ and finally judged and condemned my self for
 “ all, and lamented them before the Lord. In
 “ the next Prayer I begg’d Forgiveness of all my
 “ sins; Mortification, and Vivification. In the
 “ next Sanctification of Afflictions, and Deliver-
 “ ance from them, in due time; A Supply of all
 “ needful Blessings for me and mine. A Blessing
 “ on my Studies and Ministry; for Ministerial Ac-
 “ complishments; for Grace to carry becoming-
 “ ly in all Relations. In the next, for my Wife,
 “ Children, other Relations, Benefactors, Ene-
 “ mies, the Church and Town; for *Boxford, Ha-*
 “ *verbil, and Reading* †; for the Land; Success of
 “ the *Canada* Expedition. In the next, I gave
 “ Thanks for all God’s Benefits to me and mine;
 “ concluded with begging forgiveness of all Sin-
 “ ful Imperfections in the Day, Acceptance of
 “ what was agreeable to God’s Will; A Gracious
 “ Answer.

This is an Instance of his *Spiritual Exercise* in
 Secret Fasting, which is the principal part, *Godli-*
ness being profitable unto all things: As to the exter-
 nal Part, Bodily Exercise; tho’ it profiteth little
 in comparison — Yet as I have heard Him ob-
 serve, This profiteth too: But I know little con-
 cerning

[† Which Towns were then destitute of settled Ministers.

cerning this in his Secret Fasting, save that He used to worship — in the Lowest Postures of Humiliation, oftentimes with Prostration and the like. — But if We may guess by his Manner of Fasting in Publick, He was very Exemplary for his Bodily Abstinence as well as all other Tokens of Humiliation. In all Publick Fasts that he was called to attend, though out of Town ; on any Occasion that he was not so immediately concerned in, himself, he used commonly to Abstain from Food intirely, from Evening to Evening ; and carefully avoid all Worldly Business and Discourse ; And so likewise I have known him do when called to Assist in the Ordination of a Minister ; (which he would have had always kept as a Fast, after the Primitive Pattern Acts 14. 23.) In short, When I think of his Carriage on Fast Days, it brings to my mind the Scripture Pattern, in Isa. 58. 15. (If I may apply it to Him in this Case) He called This Sabbath his Delight, the Holy of the Lord and Honourable — not doing his own Ways, nor finding his own Pleasure nor speaking his own Words. But, to return.

I shall not Dismiss the two last Heads, without Observing, that as every Evening, commonly, in his Examinations, (which I noted before ;) so more especially, at his *FASTS* and *Meditations* before the *Sacrament*, he used to call to mind the *Evidences* of his Good Estate. Once in Preparation for the *Sacrament* he had these Thoughts.

“ What are my Evidences, some of them at least ?

“ 1. I hope I am Effectually Called ; because I

“ desire to hear and obey the voice of God. 2. I

H

“ hope

“ Hope I am a true Believer in Jesus-Christ ;
 “ Because I see the Insufficiency of my own
 “ Strength, Wisdom and Righteousness ; and the
 “ sufficiency of Christ, in all his Offices ; and de-
 “ sire to take whole Christ with my whole Soul.
 “ 3. I hope I Repent, for I hope I desire to be
 “ convinced of all Sin, and do hate all Sin, and
 “ desire to turn from it, and desire to do the
 “ whole Will of God. I have many Fears ;—
 “ arising chiefly from the strength of Corruption
 “ after much Prayer &c.

And at one of his *Fasts* he writes thus ; “ How
 “ defective have I been in getting, and gathering
 “ and recording my Evidences ! This is my Sin,
 “ my Folly : I will, by God’s Grace, do no
 “ more so foolishly.” And then proceeds to rea-
 “ son out the Evidences of his Conversion ; and has
 “ recorded them after this manner. First, “ Such
 “ as are *Blessed* ones are Converted. But I trust
 “ I am a blessed one. Ergo—— *Prob. Min. 1 Arg.*
 “ *All that are poor in Spirit* are blessed ones : But
 “ I am poor in Spirit, Ergo—— God has made
 “ me to see that I am nothing of my self, have
 “ nothing Spiritually Good, originally my own ;
 “ can do nothing but Sin ; deserve nothing but
 “ Misery—— Am in some measure willing
 “ that God do with me what he please, only
 “ that he will have Mercy upon me. I had ra-
 “ ther be a Door-keeper —&c— I hope I truly
 “ desire God’s Glory and the Salvation of the
 “ Elect, whatever becomes of me—— *2. Arg.*
 “ *All that hunger and thirst after Righteousness* are
 “ blessed ones. But I hunger and thirst after
 “ Righteousness, Ergo—— If my Heart deceive
 “ me

“ me not, I desire all Grace. I desire it for Grace
 “ sake. I desire it more than any thing of a
 “ worldly nature. I had rather have Grace with-
 “ out Gifts, than Gifts without Grace. I think I
 “ desire Grace constantly, and so also the impu-
 “ ted Righteousness of Christ.

“ *Secondly*, Another general Argument that I am
 “ in a state of Grace. They that have *any* true
 “ Grace, are converted, and in a state of Grace.
 “ But I hope I have some true Grace in me.
 “ *Ergo*—— Particularly *1st*. They that truly *Re-*
 “ *pent* of Sin, are converted. But I truly repent of
 “ Sin, I hope. *Ergo*—— They that truly hate all
 “ Sin, and that because it is against God, and are
 “ weary and heavy laden with Sin, and are free-
 “ ly willing to confess their Sins, and to do so
 “ as they can, and have Light, and are earnest-
 “ ly desirous to be more and more convinced of
 “ and humbled for Sin; and that are fixedly
 “ resolved to maintain a constant Warfare a-
 “ gainst all Sin, tho’ never so secret, all their
 “ Days; That judge and condemn themselves
 “ for their Sins; and endeavour to know and
 “ do their whole Duty, to God and Man; and
 “ when they have done all, say, They are un-
 “ profitable Servants, do truly repent. But This,
 “ all this, and a great deal more, thro’ the rich
 “ Grace of God, I can truly say, so far as I know
 “ my own Heart. *Ergo* —— *2^{dly}*. Such as
 “ truly Believe in Christ, are in a State of Grace.
 “ But I believe in my dear Lord Jesus Christ. *Er-*
 “ *go* —— I am much deceived, If He be not
 “ most precious to me for Himself, as well as his

“Benefits : And I” ——— Here he was interrupted and so left his Argument unfinished.

There is one thing more remarkable, of his extraordinary Piety, to be Added to the forgoing Instances, namely, his *Religious Vows*, which he frequently annex'd to his daily Prayers, Fastings and Sacramental Preparations ; and Especially under any pressing Difficulty, or want of a desired Mercy. Thus in the case of his removal from *Boxford*, In Imitation of *Jacob*, Gen. 28. latter end, he Vowed, That “if the Lord would make
 “way for his removal to *Bradford*, or any other
 “Place where he might be more comfortable, or
 “find out a way without his Removal, that he
 “might be more comfortable at *Boxford*——&c.
 “and find out a way that he might be delivered
 “from his oppressing Debts, and from the Temptations he met with—— he would then do his
 “endeavour to bring up one of his Sons to Learning, if they liv'd and took to it*. That he would
 “set himself to study the Interest of Christ and
 “promote it by Pastoral Visits and Laborious
 “Preaching. ——— That he would keep days of
 “private Fasting and Thanksgiving oftener than
 “he had done.” Again, “If God would by
 “his

* The largeness of his Family, and his constant Application to his Studies and Ministry, with but a small Salary at that time, occasioned his running behind-hand in the World, which he could not easily recover ; He was very much concerned about it, and often prayed for and devised proper Means to get out of his Incumbrances ; and though he was never intirely free from them, yet I believe of late Years he was more Prosperous ; and had begun to send his youngest Son to the Latin-School.

“ his Providence find out a way that he might
 “ get out of Debt, he promised to devote a cer-
 “ tain part of his yearly Income to pious Uses,
 “ and ask advice asto the Quota ” and afterwards
 he determined upon a Tenth of his Salary. At
 another time he made this Resolution “ If God
 “ will withhold me from Sin I will give Him all
 “ the Glory. ” And many such like he made be-
 ing willing to lay himself under all possible obli-
 gations to his Duty. Tho’ he was sensible that
 rash Vows were no ways beneficial but only en-
 snaring to Christians, Yet They could not be too
 forward to oblige themselves to Necessary Duties;
 and he look’d upon Religious Vows as a means to
 excite unto Duty ; and therefore especially before
 the Sacrament, he was forward to enter into par-
 ticular and expresse Bonds — fixing and record-
 ing his Resolutions against his most powerful
 Lusts and Temptations; to be most careful where
 he had been most defective before. This he did
 “ utterly despairing of his own Strength to perform
 “ them, ” much less, “ thinking to merit any
 “ thing by them, ” but he did it “ that he might
 “ be prepared for Mercy, ” and “ depending on
 “ Divine Grace to help him perform his Vows. ”

And moreover besides such Special Vows on
 particular Occasions — he had a more solemn
 way, in a most explicit formal manner, to Renew
 his Covenant with God, and engage himself unto
 all Duty ; which I shall mention as another In-
 stance of his Real Christianity, and for an Exam-
 ple to Others ; ’Twas after the Direction of Mr.
Joseph Alliene, in making a Solemn Covenant — in
Writing, and presenting it before the Lord, and Setting
the

the Hand to it, and so laying it up for a Memorial &c. So Mr. Symmes did; wrote out the Covenant drawn up by Mr. Alliene in his Directions about Conversion; And Subscribed it &c, and so time after time renewed it at his Fasts before the Sacrament; and sometimes some of his most intimate Friends with him ——— as I find 4 or 5 times one Year, following, as he says, Mr. Alliene's Direction in this matter &c.

Sect. 4. Having thus somewhat largely considered his Piety in Secret, I shall more briefly mention his *Family Religion*; which was also Devout and Exemplary. I find him sometimes in secret preparing for Family Duties; once particularly, he purposed to read that Chapter in his Study, which he was to read in the Family, and think upon it in order to expound it, after the example of Mr. Philip Henry. As in his secret Worship his Gesture was sometimes Prostrate, so I find this note concerning his Family Prayer, that on such a Day, He "began to Kneel." But what is more remarkable, was his Watchfulness in the Duty, regarding it not as a piece of Formality, and Customary Service; but considering what Spiritual Assistances and Enlargements he found in the Duty; several times recording — "I hope God helped in Family prayer &c. Blessed be God." Singing Psalms was a Duty, he very much prized and delighted in, and was excellently accomplished for; which I believe he neglected not in his Family from the Beginning, on Lord's Days at least, but of late Years constantly observed, I think morning and evening. And he did what lay in his power, that this part of
Worship

Worship might be more understood and revived in Families as well as Churches; ——— Laid a good Foundation for it, by causing the Rules of Singing, to be well taught among his People, Introducing many new Tunes into his Assembly, Preaching and Printing in the Cause, (which unhappily has become matter of Contest in many places in the Country.) And he thought it was high time that our common Custom of Reading the Line in Singing, should be laid aside, not only because of its very much interrupting the Melody and sometimes the Sense, but because the Reason of it now ceases, which was for the help of such as could not read, or want of plenty of Psalm Books; both which may now be sufficiently remedied—— Accordingly he sang so in his Family, and was once about to set up a Lecture to sing in publick, without reading the Line.

As for his Family-Instruction and Government, I can give no particular Account; only that I find him sometimes in his Diary ministring Corrections—— and also catechising the Children. But his extraordinary Spiritual Affection and deep Concern for their Good, I think sufficiently appears by what he has left for them in Writing, which is here published at the end of this *Account*. He likewise directed them to the Reading of some particular Books of Piety; I think he gave and recommended Mr. *Burkitt* on the *New Testament* to one of his Sons; and advised and charged all his Children in a special manner, to read often and peruse Mr. *Thomas Hooker* of the *Application of Redemption*.

Sect. 5. I shall nextly here add, something further of his *Piety*, considered a little more extensively, in his *Occasional Discourse and Conferences* with his Neighbours. He often prayed, and endeavoured to furnish himself for *Religious Conference*; I shall relate one or two Passages concerning it out of his Diary; shewing how Thoughtful he was to engage in and prepare for it; and also how desirous he was of it, and how much Delight he took in it. "I think, it may be very proper for me very often in conversing with Others, (says he) where I may; to say as Arch-Bishop *Usher*, (and introduce it as his Saying) *One Word of CHRIST before we part*: and accordingly to have some suitable Consideration of Christ in readiness to offer. Lord, revive and quicken me." Again; Once having been visited by a favourable Christian, he writes; "It revives me to discourse of Spiritual Things: I wish it were more practiced. It never troubles me afterwards when I thus discourse, save that I have discoursed no better.

I have heard that he was uncommonly furnished for agreeable Conference with the Sick: Indeed I once heard him discourse a Sick Man; and he was very Compassionate and Familiar and Chearful, and very particular in his Directions, proceeding gradually from step to step, till he had led him to the Rock that was higher than he, to renew his Covenant containing all his Salvation.— He knew how to speak a word in season to weary disconsolate Saints, as some of them have witnessed; and to stupid impenitent

penitent Sinners: He was able to do it from his own Experiences; 'tis well known how ready he was, when Occasion call'd for it, to communicate his Knowledge and Experiences; the like I find in his Diary; (for he has sometimes recorded his Conferences with the Sick, together with some affectionate and earnest Pleadings with God, he was directed to use in Prayer :) I shall here relate one remarkable Passage and Great Saying, uttered to a Sick Man, who, he was afraid, wanted some taste of the powers of the World to come. "I told him, (says he) So far as I know my own Heart, if I knew there were no Hell, and had the offer either to be made holy and live in a mean Cottage, a poor despised Life; or to be Emperor of the Universe, and have no Grace; I should chuse Grace and a Cottage, rather than the Empire without it."

C H A P. VIII.

His Labours in the Ministry.

THUS far I have principally considered him in a private Capacity, as a *Christian*; I now proceed to give some more particular and full Account of him also, considered in his more publick Capacity, as a Minister of the Gospel.

And,

Sect. 1. In his STUDIES and PREPARATIONS for the Pulpit. In these he studied in the first place to approve himself to God, by observing *Luther's Maxim, Bene Grasse &c.* to direct him

him in the choice of proper Subjects, and help him then in the most suitable manner to represent his Messages to the People. Nextly, He not only prayed, but meditated how he might best reach the Consciences of Men; not only to perform his Task in Preaching, but to do them Good. [Accordingly I find he hath set down this Rule in his Bible; "In preparing to preach, don't think, What will gain me Credit and Applause? what will please the People? but think what would Jesus Christ speak, and how would Jesus Christ speak to this People, were He to speak to them immediately? and endeavour so to speak. 1 Pet. 4. 11] For this end he studied Plainness, a clear easy Method, and mostly Scripture Language: (which Christians that are sincere, are most likely to be acquainted with, and this being most quick and powerful,) Agreeably he set down in his Bible this Verse;

*Unus Apex Verbi, Ratione valentior omni,
Milleque Decretis, Conciliisque prior.*

And he studied Men, not merely to know how to please their Ears, but how to reach their Hearts, most effectually. He considered the Spiritual Wants & Circumstances of Sinners & Saints; & endeavoured to suit his Sermons to the various Aspects and Turns of Providence over his own People or the Publick; in Sicknes, Drought, Scarcity &c. Success or Barrenness of his Ministry; any thing remarkable in the War, as the Overthrow at *Norridgewock*; the Fight at *Piggwacket*, on the latter of which he preached and printed; and the Death of Others, especially of Good Men of Note, far or near. — He preached a Funeral Sermon on the

the Death of the French King, from Prov. 11.10.—
When the wicked perish, there is shouting.

Sett. 2. In the PULPIT, he was very much in his Element, full of Life and Courage; and tho' he took great pains, I scarce ever knew him complain of Weariness. He loved to be often there; and said himself, He believed no Man took greater Delight in the Pulpit than he did. The stated Exercises which he performed, were Prayer, reading a Chapter out of the holy Scriptures, Singing, (which he did three times every Sabbath throughout the Year, and as often on Fast Days;) Preaching, wherein he truly excell'd: His Sermons in themselves were excellent; full of quick and bright Thoughts; the Publick has had some taste of them in his few printed Discourses*: But his extraordinary Delivery added a very great Beauty and Force to them; He sometimes charmed his Auditory, like the Prophet Ezekiel, *Who was unto them as a very lovely Song, of one that had a pleasant Voice, and could play well on an Instrument.*

He took a very good course to excel, proposing to himself, in his younger Days, not only One, but Several whom he tho't the best Patterns. And he had a laudable Ambition; he aimed to excel, and yet sought not his own Glory; for as the Reverend Mr. Colman, in the Preface to his *Artillery Election-Sermon*, intimates of him, “ He
 I 2 “ was

* His *Monitor* for Delaying Sinners; *Artil. Elect. Sermon*, 1720. Discourse against Prejudice; *Ordination Sermon* at Malden; *The People's Interest*; *The Brave Lovewell Lamented*.

"was out of the way of Fame, or any worldly Reward." And till of late Years, I think his Labours appeared but little abroad. His Aim was to do Good: 'twas the Commendation of Heaven he esteemed and desired. Agreeably I heard him once say, upon hearing of a certain Sermon preached in the Audience of the General Court, that was very acceptable to them, "How much greater Honour is it to be accepted of Heaven!"

Sett. 3. CATECHISING he esteemed, and accordingly practised, as a very useful Ordinance and part of his Ministry, not only for the instructing of little Children; but the training up of Young Men, till they were settled in Religion compleat Christians, as well as settled in the World. Agreeably he not only went all over the Town, to Catechise Children as usual; but he sometimes in the Summer Season, called the Young Men, as many at a time as he thought convenient, to answer in the face of the Congregation on the Lord's Day, instead of reading the Scriptures in the Afternoon, (thereby proposing Advantage to the whole Assembly;—) asking them 2 or 3 Questions at most, at a time, in the Assembly's Catechism; and giving a short Exposition on the Answers, one at least: And so went on till he had gone through the Catechism.

Sett. 4. For ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE, he had very good Accomplishments, both natural and acquired; and was pretty well experienced in it, having had several perplexing Cases

Cases to try his Skill and Courage ; And he was heartily desirous of reviving and bringing it to greater Perfection. He had a great value for the *Platform*, and made use of it to the utmost, with a respect to Order, and out of Regard to his Forefathers ;—— Accordingly he read the substance of it to his Church, and made it binding to them by a Vote, “ Resolving and Promising “ by the help of God, to practice according to “ the substance of it, till God should give them “ further Light ; or the Churches in the Country “ be supply’d with a more correct and agreeable “ Platform.” And accordingly they chose Ruling Elders to assist the Pastor in all matters of Government in the Church. He was a very strenuous Asserter of the power of the Presbytery, but far enough from usurping the just Privileges of the Laity : He would not suspend a scandalous Brother, nor restore a Penitent, nor dismiss a Member, nor fix the stated Times for the holy Communion, but by a Vote of the Church, as I find by the Church-Book. And tho’ for want of the ready Concurrence and Assistance of others, he could not do so much as he would in Church-Discipline, yet his Church was brought into exemplary Order : I shall relate one or two Instances ;—— The *Brethren* I find have bound themselves by a Vote, universally to attend all Church-Meetings, on penalty of being accounted Delinquents, and admonished before the whole Church, unless they give seasonable sufficient Reasons to the Elder or Elders for not attending——. And they have determined, that Sleeping at Meeting, especially laying down the Head

Head to Sleep, in time of publick Worship, is a very great Indecency and Irreverence, and justly offensive, and to be observed and reprov'd in any of the Church, especially Communicants; and if not reformed, the Church is to be stay'd after Exercise, and the Persons are to be called forth before them, and admonish'd.

He took great Pains, and went as far as he could, in bringing his Church to practice according to the Result of the Synod in 1662, in Disciplining the Children of the Church; and to tell the Reader how far he proceeded in order hereto, as well as to revive and maintain Discipline in all its Branches; About 4 Years ago, he drew up a sort of an Instrument *in perpetuam rei memoriam*, so intituled, and therefore I think worthy to be remembred here; which the Church voted, and above 80 of the Brethren signed. Taking into serious consideration the 3d. Prop. of the Synod in 1662 &c. and also the 4th Section in the Expedients for Reformation, agreed upon and propos'd by the Synod in 1679. — Likewise what is asserted by the Association at Cambridge — in the History of New-England, Book V. pag. 48. — And being informed that the Reverend Elders in the Neighbourhood, and some of the Churches had the same thing under consideration, and convinced of their Obligations to watch over one another, and all baptized Persons grown up; very solemnly and religiously promised to God and one another, to study to know and do their Duty to those in full Communion, and to all the baptized among them; particularly, (in these Words) “ *First*, That we will be careful
“ to

“ to watch over one another, and admonish one
 “ another of and for what we observe amiss;
 “ and to pursue the Directions given by our
 “ Saviour in the 18th of *Matthew*, with respect to
 “ such as give Offence. *Secondly*, That we will
 “ to our Power, be aiding and assisting to our
 “ Elders for the time being, in dealing with Of-
 “ fenders, whether in full Communion or Chil-
 “ dren of the Church; by readily appearing to
 “ give in suitable Information and Evidence as
 “ we can, in all Matters that may come before
 “ them. *Thirdly*, That we will be careful not to
 “ set any bad Example before those that are
 “ without, by a needless and unseasonable being
 “ at the Tavern, and sitting with vain Persons,
 “ and drinking intemperately; and will (by God’s
 “ help) take it kindly of any that shall in a Chri-
 “ stian manner, admonish us of any thing of this
 “ Nature they observe in us. *Finally*, That we
 “ will readily submit to, and to our utmost, de-
 “ fend and vindicate our Elder or Elders for the
 “ time being, and the Church, in whatever Cen-
 “ sures consonant to Reason, Scripture and the
 “ Platform of Discipline, they shall have occasi-
 “ on to pass on any amongst us, that may be so
 “ unhappy as to expose themselves thereto.”

Voted Jan. 17. 1721-2. — Thus far Mr. Symmes
 proceeded with his own Church, in this weighty
 but almost obsolete Matter of Church Discipline,
 particularly with respect to the Children of the
 Church; this he did partly to encourage and
 strengthen other Churches in this Duty; as he
 was often persuading them by their Pastors unto
 the same. For this end also he was striving to
 form

form the neighbouring Churches into a Confociation; proposed it unto his own Church, who voted to send to the neighbouring Churches about it; accordingly he prepared a Letter,—— but meeting with some Discouragement, it failed.

Seet. 5. Besides these stated Parts of his Ministry, he took **OTHER OCCASIONS** of doing Good to Souls. Once a Fortnight he used commonly to attend a private Meeting of sober Christians, where he used to Pray, Read or Preach a Sermon; and occasionally attended other such Societies in the same manner. Once a Month, he used to preach a publick Lecture, as long as he thought it Serviceable to Religion. And once a Month, since his Lectures were laid down, carried on a Church-Fast, in preparation, before the Sacrament. And not rarely appointed occasional Fasts in publick, besides promoting and assisting in the same in neighbouring Towns. Once a Quarter, or oftener, he preached at a Young Men's Meeting, a Sermon suited to the Rising Generation, which he had much at heart: The first Sermon he printed, was preached on such an Occasion. He was careful to visit the Sick at all times, especially if they sent for him, which he expected from them as their Duty*. And he made a Business of Personal Application to Souls.—— I have known him, since my short acquaintance with him, desire all his young People, that had not come to the Lord's Table, to come to his House on certain set Days in the Week,

* Jam 5. 14. *Is any Sick? Let him send for the Elders of the Church.*

Week, at which times he diligently examined and gave suitable Directions to each one singly; and thus went on with his Hands full from Morning to Night, till he had gone thro' — : Soon after this, I think he had a very great Addition to his Church. At another time he has proposed to go himself to each House in the Town, about 2 or 3 in a Day, and gave Notice on the Sabbath, where and when he intended to visit, that the People might be at home — ; and thus went the Rounds, endeavouring to know the state of his Flock, to quicken, strengthen and comfort them; in which set and solemn Visits, he suffered nothing to divert the religious Errand he went upon; as in occasional unexpected Visits is too common, and much more difficult to avoid.

Sect. 6. There is one thing more very remarkable, and fit to be remembred of him, as a wise and faithful Minister and Watchman; viz. His great Care and Endeavour for the PEACE and SETTLEMENT of his People after his DECEASE: — Something of this is to be seen in his *Farewel-Advice*, which he left plainly transcribed for them, published at the End of this Account: Besides this, he openly manifested it in the Pulpit many Years before his Death; in a Sermon which he purposed to transcribe to leave with them, shewing how they should proceed from Step to Step, in chusing a Minister after his Death &c. but his sudden Death has prevented it, with some other things of the like Nature. However his Thought of it is worthy of our Remembrance, and the Sermon deserves now to be

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called

called to mind ; And, I find, is capable, the most of it, of being Transcribed. And it must needs be a word in Season to his People, and I hope may be a word of Weight and Force with them under their present Circumstances ; both because 'twas prepared as the Dying Advice of their now Departed Friend and Faithful Instructor ; and therefore should be received with Solemnity as his Voice from the Dead ; And also because, it having been preached 9 Years ago, and looking forward so far as this time, it must needs be thought most Impartial Advice, without any Prejudice or Bias'd Respect to any thing peculiar in their Circumstances now : And the nature of the Subject clears the Author from any Colour of Self-Interest in it ; and his People will always, I presume, at least now, maintain such a Veneration for him, as with all Readiness to follow such Important Advice, (as far as consonant to the Word of God) which he was at the pains to prepare so long before hand. And moreover it may be useful for other Destitute Towns and Churches to Receive the same Advice ; and for all People to have those things in Remembrance against the Departure of their Teachers from them.

These things considered, I shall venture to publish the substance of the Sermon, the latter Part entirely, as I might do the Whole, but that I find the Author has not left the former Part so plain either as to Matter or Method, designing to transpose some things. If I don't do Justice to the Author, I hope the Reader will make Allowance for it, as a posthumous Piece.

[Vid. Chap. XI. Sect. 6.]

These

These are some of the visible Instances of the Travel of his Soul, and his abundant Labours in the Evangelical Work; I shall go on now briefly to relate something of the Fruit of his Labours.

CHAP. IX.

His Successfulness in his Work.

DIVINE Providence has been observed to bear Witness many times, that his *Prayers* with his People, were heard and come up for a Memorial before God; in removing or preventing Sickness; obtaining Rain or fair Weather &c. When he has laboured under any perplexing and almost hopeless Difficulties and Disorders in the Church, God did always at length, so succeed his Skill and unwearied Courage in *Church-Government*, as to give a comfortable and happy Issue; without so much as calling a Council, which has sometimes been desired and expected. But his *Preaching* and *Pastoral Visits* have been followed with remarkable Success. The Church was almost Trebly increased in the 17 Years of his Ministry. He admitted 232 Persons to the Lord's Table, —at *Bradford*; and had at the Communion at once, as he has remarked, 234; (*Jan. 11. 1723.*) The whole Church now consists of near 250, and the Town but about six score Families. He had sometimes added to the Church in that small Town, Twenty or Thirty in a Year; and oftentimes Five or Six at a time: And in one Year (1720) 59 were admitted to the Sacrament, and 46 of them in three Months time, and 25 in one Day.

But what most of all adds to his Honour and Crown in this matter, is his humbleness of Mind under all, devoutly ascribing all the Praise to God alone. As often as there were any Additions to the Church, considerable either for the Number, or perhaps the Hopefulness of the Persons, He has recorded with their Names, *Soli Deo Triumphant sit omnis Gloria; Laus Deo in eternum. Gloria Deo in Excelsis. Non mihi sed Tibi, Domine Jesu, To God be all the Glory* †. He did not forget to be thankful for small Additions as well as great; I observed particularly, the Year after that great Addition to his Church, when there were but two Persons added in the whole Year, he affixed his usual Doxology, *Laus Deo*.

C H A P. X.

His Sickness and Death.

HE was naturally a Man of a firm Constitution, and by his Countenance, and activity in his Work, generally appeared to be in perfect Health, till his last Sickness, which was scarce ten Days before his Death: It was therefore something surprizing, even to his Physicians, to see him so suddenly fallen into such “a Cachectic and Scorbatic Habit of Body” as they inform me he was, “the Crasis of his Blood being entirely destroyed, the Natural Secretions all perverted, with universal Extravasations appearing in the musculous Parts of his Body, and

† In the Church-Book at Bradford, and at Boxford.

“ great Hemorrhæes from the Mouth and Fauces,
“ which continued till he died”.

’Tis supposed this might be owing to “ his sedentary and very studious Life, & extraordinary Care upon his Mind, (especially towards the very last, which might hasten on his Distempers;) But tho’ he usually appeared Sound and Well, yet I have observed him several Years, at times, labouring under sometimes a very ill Appetite and Digestion; sometimes extraordinary Pains either in his Head, Breast or Back &c. So that his fatal Diseases might be all this while growing upon him: But however, it was with so much Moderation, that he bore up under them, and constantly carried on his publick Ministry; so that he was confined but one Sabbath, till he began his everlasting Rest; tho’ indeed the last Sabbath that he preached, he was very faint, having once or twice bled considerable Quantities at the Nose; but yet sent not for a Doctor till about a Week before his Death, when the Issue of Blood could hardly be stop’d: And tho’ indeed after about 26 Hours bleeding, it was seemingly stop’d (by “ the use of many powerful “ Remedies”; and the Prayers of a Religious Society making Intercession for him at that Interim, to which he principally ascribed it) yet one of his Physicians tells me that “ his Bleeding still “ continued either at the Nose or Mouth, to the “ last hour of his Life;” (or at least inwardly, he thinks;) which tho’ he looked upon only as a Symptom of his Illness, yet it so “ weakned him, “ and filled his Stomach” with the putrid Gore, that it “ was a most destructive Symptom” in him.

After

After he was confined by his Sickneſs, he was ſoon reduced to ſuch extream Weakneſs and Faintneſs, that he could ſcarce bear the Company of his Friends, much leſs talk freely to them himſelf: However, being naturally full of Diſcourſe, he was very deſirous of ſaying what he could; and wiſhed he could ſay more, that “ ſeeing he “ had done ſo little for God in his Life, he might “ *Glorify him in his Death.*” What he ſaid was principally concerning himſelf; He deſired to ſearch and examine himſelf, and wiſhed he “ might get ſafe to Heaven.” He was once in his Sickneſs under Clouds; and tho’t with himſelf, (as he told me) “ What if I am deceived all “ this while, what will become of me then?” In which caſe, he ſaid, he endeavourd to take “ that “ Advice to the Angel of the Church of the Lao-
diceans, (Be cauſe thou ſayeſt, I am rich—— and “ knoweſt not that thou art wretched and miſerable &c.) “ I counſel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, “ that thou mayeſt be rich, white Raiment that thou “ mayeſt be clothed &c. and found great Comfort “ in it.” Afterwards he had a very ſweet Peace and Calmneſs——. Till within 4 or 5 days of his Death, he was in ſome hopes of Recovery, being willing to live longer for the ſake of his Family and People; though he was not terrified at the Thoughts of Death, yet was he deſirous to prepare for it, and to get good by his Affliction: For this end he ſaid, he had endeavourd to take to himſelf the Advice which he was wont to give others in ſuch a caſe, which was “ to renew their Covenant by Faith and Repentance, and make their Vows to ſerve God better in every
Rela-

Relation ;” and he found it very comfortable Advice. When he told me this, he express’d his great Humility, Nothingness, Self-abhorrence, under a sense of the vileness of his Heart, and his past unexemplariness and unprofitableness; and manifested his entire Reliance on Christ’s Righteousness for Justification before God: And hoped, if he should live, he should do better in every Relation: And also reckoned up some of the good Evidences he had then, to this purpose, saying, “ Christ hath said, *Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*—— *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled.* I can truly say, I have for many Years desired Grace for Grace sake, not not as a sinking Man desires a Boat to save him from drowning, but because grace makes him like God; fits him to *serve* God, and prepares to enjoy Him. Christ hath said, *If ye forgive Men their Trespases, your Heavenly Father will forgive you:* I can truly do That.—— I have abundance of Sin in me, but I hope I can say with the Apostle, *That which I do, I allow not; but what I hate*——. I have not loved Sinners in my Life; I hope God will not gather my Soul with them when I die. I have loved the People of God, and desired their Company, I hope I shall go to be with them.—— I can truly say, I never begrutched any Pains in my Ministry, was always willing to spend and be spent, and I hope I did from a good Principle and for a right end;—— yet not I, but the Grace of God. Alas, I am nothing &c.”—— He then desired there might be a Fast kept on his Account, appointed

appointed the Time for it, sent to the neighbouring Ministers to assist in it, and pray for him in the mean time with their Congregations on the Lord's Day. This was *Friday Evening*. After this he said little, but as he had several times done, that his present "Affliction was the most profitable Affliction he ever met with in his Life" &c. On the Lord's Day he inclined very much to sleep, and took little or no Notice of his Friends from that time; but lived till *Tuesday*, which was the Fast: But all the united Prayers of his own praying People (and other godly Friends) that used with him to obtain great things by Prayer, could not obtain his Life. In the Afternoon the Assembly was interrupted with Apprehensions of his Change: A Minister was sent for from the Meeting-House to pray with him before he expired, who did accordingly; and upon asking him if he was "freely willing" to resign his Soul to his Saviour" &c. — He lifted up his Hand, and said, *Yes*. After which he was not able any ways to express his Mind; but continued breathing till a little after Mid-night; and then his Breath went forth, and set his Soul at liberty to ascend unto God, and left a pleasant Corps, yet a mournful Spectacle, to return to the Earth. *Oct. 6. 1725. Aetatis 48.*

His Body was laid in the Grave the next *Friday, Oct. 8th.* with due Respect and Solemnity. And his People, who had about two Years before added 30 Pounds to his Salary for that Year, (and some particular Persons in the Town made him a Collection of five and twenty Pounds the same Year;) and the last Year very cheerfully added

40 Pounds, which together with his Salary, made 140 *l.* likely to have continued yearly, went on still to shew kindness after his Death, and engaged 50 Pounds towards his Funeral Charges, besides making plentiful and very handsome Provision for the Refreshment of the Mourners and other Friends and Strangers, the Evening after his Funeral, by their bountiful Presents; and have since voted to pay his full Salary to the Year's end, more than Three Months after his Death: Who I hope will not find it in vain to continue their Ministerial Liberalities, and *not leave off their Kindness to the Living and to the Dead.*

Thus departed this very useful Man, who in less than a fortnight after Preaching, went down into Silence, sudden to us, tho' not surprising to him: Who seems to have had his Desire, who was sometimes ready to wish on some Accounts, that he might not live to be an old Man; and used to say, 'twas "more pleasant for a Candle "to be fairly extinguished whilst fully burning, "than go out in a Snuff and leave a Stink; and "more glorious for the Sun to cease shining in "its full Meridian, than to set in a Cloud." He desired more to do Service, than to live long: And he seems to have been somewhat apprehensive of a sudden Death; and therefore began timely, in a formal manner, to take his Leave of the World; lest, as it has proved, he should not have Opportunity in his dying Hours, to speak his Mind; as, his *Advice* to his Children and Servants, and *Farewel* to his People, in the following Chapter sheweth; which was partly begun many Years before his Death.

C H A P. XI.

Being a *Supplement* or *Appendix* to
the foregoing ACCOUNT,

Containing some distinct Writings of Mr.
T. Symmes, upon several Miscellaneous
Subjects.

Above 17 Years ago, he began to write his Advice and Charge to his Children; wrote a prefatory Epistle, set down some Minutes of the Advice; but then laid it by, a considerable time: I find him several times, in his Diary, purposing to proceed therein; but don't find that he did, till as near as I can guess, about a dozen Years ago, when he began to write "*A Farewel to the World*, under these Heads, 1. *To my Wife*. 2. *To my Children*. 3. *To all that are or have been my Servants*. 4. *To the Church and Town of Bradford*. 5. *To Boxford*. 6. *To my Relations*. 7. *To my Benefactors*. 8. *To my personal Enemies*. 9. *To the Ministers of the Gospel, my Fellow-Labourers*. 10. *To New-England*. 11. *To my Nation*. 12. *To the Jews*. Finally, *To the World of Mankind*." He did not live to write upon all these; However we see by this, not only his Thôtfulness of Death —; but the noble Design which was in his Heart, shewing something of his Catholick Spirit, and extensive Charity, and Concern for all Mankind. — I shall gratify the Readers so far as to set down something that he did write under

under some of the Heads mentioned ; which they will doubtless esteem worth the reading, and very useful and applicable to any others in like Circumstances.

Secl. I. Mr. Symmes's Advice to his Children.

He subscribes it thus——

My Advice and Charge, which I leave with my dear Children Thomas, Andrew, and John, and Elizabeth ; began Feb. 12. 1707--8.

By me *T. Symmes.*

The Prefatory Epistle to my Children.

My Dear Children,

SINCE I know not the Day of my Death, have no assurance to live until you are capable of being advised and charged by me, by Word of Mouth, I have thought it my Duty to leave behind me (if it be God's Will) something that may hereafter be of Use to you ; and that may let you understand you have had a Father unspeakably concerned for your everlasting Happiness ; and not altogether unconcerned for your Happiness in this World.

God only knows with what inexpressible Agony of Soul I have carried you all before the Throne of Grace, and have pleaded for your Salvation, as for my own.

I have given you all to God in *Baptism*, and laid you all under indispensable Obligations to

forfake the Flesh, World and Devil; and to be the Lord's wholly, only and for ever.

I have chosen and taken the Lord Jehovah, Father Son and holy Ghost, to be *your* God. And he *will* be your God for ever, and your Guide even until Death, if you don't wickedly neglect or refuse; when you come to age, to renew your Baptismal Covenant, and to live agreeably thereto.

I am like to have nothing considerable of an earthly Nature to leave with you or for you: But the same God who has provided for *me*, is able to provide for you. And if you walk uprightly, you shall want nothing that God sees good for you. My Sons, *God will provide*. Only keep in *his* Way, and remember *his* Commandments to do *them*.

I have been followed a long time with an unaccountable Impulse on my Spirit, that something I must leave for you in writing: And not knowing but it may be, and hoping that it is, *of God*; I have undertaken to make an Essay of this kind. And I am the more inclined to do so, because I know not how God may deal with me, or with you after my decease.

And now, *my Children*, I pray God be your God, as he has been the God of your Fathers in many Generations. I pray God to own and bless my poor Endeavours for your eternal Good; that you may be effectually awakened, enlightened, thoro'ly converted, justified, adopted, sanctified, & at length glorified in the highest Heavens. And I pray you, and charge you, seriously and frequently to read and meditate on what I have now written.

I have desired to write as a Man *passing into Eternity*; and just what I would have said to you all, (had you been capable of understanding it) had I been sure never to have spoken a Word more unto you.

See then that you read it from time to time, with such Thoughts as these, *This would my dear Father advise and charge me*, were he now alive.

Your loving Father,

T. Symmes.

[When he wrote this Preface, he did not go on with his Advice, but only set down some Minutes to be after enlarged: But some Years afterwards he went on, in another Paper, thus.]

To my dear Children, *Thomas, Andrew, John, Elizabeth and Zechariah* *.

MY dear Children; for whom I have travailed in Birth, that Christ might be formed in you! I have scarce mis'd a Day, since you were any of you born, but I have prayed for you by Name. You are Children of the Covenant. There is a large stock of Prayers laid up for you: I have, according to my poor measure, given you to God, and exercised Faith for you. God knows how often, and with what Agony and unutterable Groaning, I have prayed God, that you might all live in his Sight: That you

* 'Tis not for want of as great Affection, nor because the following Advice don't belong to his other Children, *Anna, Abigail and Sarah*, that their Names are not mentioned, but because they were not then born; and their Father would doubtless have directed it to them also, if he had had time to revise and transcribe it before his Death.

might be all taught of God: That he would give you perfect Hearts: That he would be your Father, and the Guide of your Youth: That God would provide for you, and dispose of you all as might be most for his Glory, and your Good. I have designed divers Years, to write something by way of Advice and Charge to leave with you. But I have conflicted with such uncommon Difficulties, that have been a great hindrance to me. I yet intend, if God spare my Life, to draw up some Directions for you, to instruct you 1. As to your Spiritual, and 2dly. as to your Civil Worldly Concerns. But lest I should be taken away before I have time to do so, I shall write briefly here, what may afterwards be more enlarged.

I. As to your Spiritual Concerns. As I said, you have great Encouragement to seek to God for Mercy: But be sure don't trust to your outward Priviledges. Realize, that by Nature you are in a most sinful, miserable Condition; and except you be converted, you will surely perish. Realize also, that you cannot work Grace in your Hearts, nor be justified on the account of your own Righteousness in whole or in part before God. Realize that there is all Fulness in Jesus Christ; That he is able to draw you to himself; and that his Righteousness is sufficient for your Justification. I beseech and charge you therefore, to set upon the Duty of secret Prayer; and beg of God to work true Grace in your Souls, and to call you effectually; to work Faith in you, and enable you to close aright with Jesus Christ, as your Prophet Priest and King. Give
up

up your selves to God in Christ. Take heed of doing the Work in your own Strength: Lie at the Feet of Jesus Christ; acknowledge that you are in his Hands, and that he will do you no wrong if he condemn you for ever: yet plead with him, that he has call'd you to come to him; that he has taken you visibly into Covenant with himself; and that you are undone for ever, unless he have Mercy on you: and resolve to lie at his Feet, and that if you perish, you'll perish there. Take heed of Despair, and take heed also of Presumption. Be much in Prayer, and be diligent in reading the Word of God, and other good Books. Make Conscience of keeping holy the Lord's Day; and if you live to Years of Maturity, take the first Opportunity to seek admission to the Lord's Table. Be very mindful in the mean time of your Baptism, by which you are obliged to forsake the Flesh, the World and the Devil, and to give up your selves to God, to be his Servants for ever——. I charge you also be Dutiful to your Mother, and to all your Superiors, where'er God may dispose of you.

Be careful also to flee youthful Lusts, such as Lying, Stealing, Vanity and Frothiness; Unclean-ness of Heart, Eye or Hand, or Tongue, or any kind or degree of that Sin. Take heed of all Intemperance and Excess in Drinking——: Take heed of keeping bad Company. My Children, if Sinners entice you, consent not: He that walk-eth with the wise, shall be wise; but a Compa-nion of Fools shall be destroyed. Take heed of Pride and Passionateness, of Impatience and Dis-content: Take heed of Idleness——; and take heed

heed of quenching the Spirit, and of stifling Con-
 victions, and putting off to *hereafter* the Duties
 God requires of you——: Take heed of making
 rash Vows; they often prove the Snares of the
 Devil: (I know by sad Experience.) Take heed
 of falling from good Beginnings. Ben't scar'd
 from Religion, by the Difficulties in the way
 thereof: Remember it's better to suffer Affliction
 with the People of God——: 'Tis never too
 soon to fear God and keep his Commands: But
 remember you can keep no Command until you
 believe: Without Faith it's impossible to please
 God. To have done; I charge you all to seek and
 serve the Lord God of your Fathers with a per-
 fect Heart, and a willing Mind: If ye seek him,
 he will be found of you; but if you forsake him,
 he will cast you off for ever.

II. As to your worldly Concerns; Beg of God
 to make all your Choices for you; to chuse your
 Callings; Place of Abode; Companions——.
 Begin all weighty Affairs with Prayer. Be advi-
 sed: In the multitude of Counsellors there is safe-
 ty. Do nothing rashly. Don't seek great things
 for your selves. Let that which is necessary be
 done first. Love and be kind to your Minister.
 Be diligent in your Callings. Be frugal, and not
 sneaking, in your Expenses. Take heed of run-
 ning into Debt, on any account. I have found it
 a great snare. Proportion your Expences ever to
 your Income. Don't affect to wear or spend a-
 bove your Rank. Remember it's God instructs to
 Discretion, gives power to get Wealth: His Ble-
 ssing makes Rich. If ever God make you Heads
 of

of Families, maintain Religion in your Families. Be ready to forgive Injuries; slow to resent them. Be kind to the Poor: Remember the *Dutch Proverb*;

Thefts never enrich; Alms never impoverish; and Prayer binders no Work.

Seek first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and all these things shall be added. Learn betimes to hate Sin, and love God, and prize Christ, and bear the Cross——. And O let me see none of you at Christ's *left Hand* in the Day of Christ. Often think how fearful your Condemnation will be, if you are found out of Christ in the Day of Judgement. O better, ten thousand times had it been, that you had not been born: But, O how happy if you are found in Christ! I tell you, you had better live in Hell with Christ to Eternity, than in Heaven without him.

My Dear Children, I commend you all to the Infinite Mercy of an allsufficient God, the God of your Fathers in many Generations; with Him I leave you being persuaded he will care for you; Yea, knowing He will do so, if you keep his Covenant, and remember his Commands to do them: praying He will be your God for Ever, and your Guide even to Death; and give us a joyful Meeting in the Heavenly World, there to live and reign together with our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, thro' the Endless Ages of Eternity. *Amen! Amen! Amen!*

P. S. What is written before is the first, and a rude Draught, just what came to my Mind, and

A Plain Memorative Account

is not digested and duely methodized ; If God give Opportunity, I may draw it over again and correct it. But as it is You may see something of my Concernedness for you. What you have seen amiss in me, mend in your selves, and follow me only so far as I have followed Christ, neither in Principles nor Practice. —

Sect. II. Mr. Symmes's Farewel-Advice to his Servants.

To my Servants, or all that have lived in my Family, that yet live ; I bid you Farewel. I charge you remember the Advice and Counsel I have given you from time to time ; to flee Youthful Lusts ; to attend Secret Prayer ; and give your selves to God. I'm sorry for every Thing unexemplary, you have seen or heard in my Family from me or mine ; Don't imitate any thing that is evil.

I pray the Lord of Heaven to bless you. While you have lived with me I have prayed for you almost every Day by name. I shall now pray for you no more : Besure pray for your selves, live Holily while on Earth, then if God see meet, you shall live happily : But whatever befall you in that Vale of Tears, you shall dwell eternally in God's Presence in the highest Heavens, where is fulness of Joy, and Glory in its Consummation.

Sect. III.

Sect. III. Mr. Symmes's Farewel to his People.

To my Dear Charge, the Inhabitants and all the Hearers, especially the Church, in Bradford.

Dearly Beloved, Farewel in the Lord.

I thank you very heartily for all your Kindness to me and mine. I thank you for the Love and Respect you have shown me, in your diligent, devout and constant Attendance on my Ministry. And for the many other Tokens of Love many of you have given me: God is not Unfaithful to forget your Work and Labour of Love.

I have been greatly wrong'd and it will appear so another Day about my leaving Boxford and settling with you: I have laid those things more to heart, than the World is sensible of. I freely forgive such as have injured me. I pray God forgive Them: and pray and adjure my Friends to do the like. The Lord give them Repentance. I'm grieved I've been so unserviceable, so slothful, so unexemplary amongst you: That you have been so much disquieted and unhappy on my account: God knows how I have mourned for this.

What you have seen amiss in me, pray bury with me. I have not shun'd to declare, according to my measure, the whole Counsel of God to you; and trust I am pure, thro' the Blood of sprinkling, from the Blood of all Men. I beseech

you and charge you, as you intend to answer it at the dreadful Tribunal of Christ, that you remember and live the Truths I have delivered to you: Endeavour to reform what I've told you is amiss. Take heed you don't deceive your selves by being Hearers only. Forgive one another. Love one another. If it be possible live peaceably. Above all, believe in Jesus Christ, and then you will do every thing else.

I pray God bless you and your Posterity. Be kind to my poor Children, I pray you.

Be careful to begin all matters of Moment by Prayer. Be sure in meditating the Settling another Minister, do so. And be well advised. Don't be self-conceited, any of you, and wilful:— But sit down with what is done by the Majority, if the Person chosen be neither Heterodox nor Scandalous. When you have chosen a Minister (and I pray you may have one every way superior to my self, in Ministerial Abilities, I mean,) give him an Honourable Maintenance. I may now speak freely; it's impossible a Minister should do the Work of a Minister, if he han't a Gospel-Minister's Maintenance; I mean, ordinarily. I know not what to say particularly, but this I say, Don't think you have done your Duty, if you have done what the Town proposes at first; unless you will make this Proposal as a Town, That this you will do for him at present, and desire him, if he want more afterward, he should freely say it to the Town; And if it be in the Town's Power, he shall have it. Let particular Persons go to him, and say, and that often, *Is any thing wanted?*

And

And lay it up for a Principle, and teach it your Children; that there is nothing lost that is bestowed on a Gospel Minister, as such. Visit your Minister often: Make your Presents of Respect or Testimonial Charity: I know the Heart of a Minister, and I'm sure you'll serve him more than a little, by little matters, seasonably and kindly done. It's not the Gift, but the Mind of the Giver, that is observed principally. But then, above all, attend diligently to his Ministry: Diligent Laborious Hearers, for ever, make a diligent and laborious Minister; if he've any Goodness in him. Endeavour to profit by your Minister: Improve him: Lay open your spiritual Cases before him: He's a Talent you are accountable for. The Lord, that walks in the midst of the Golden Candlesticks, walk still in this; brighten it, increate it, preserve it, supply it; fill it from time to time, with a burning and shining Light, and hold the Stars that may be sent hither, in his own right Hand. And the Lord grant that you may be my Joy, and Crown of Rejoicing in the Day of the Lord Jesus.

Finally, Brethren, Farewel: Be perfect; Be of one Mind; Live in Peace: And the God of Love and Peace be with you all, Amen.

Sect. IV. *Mr. Symmes's Advice and Instruction about chusing a Minister to succeed him after his Death; delivered Sept. 16. 1716. Intituled, "A Legacy of Advice to the Church of Bradford :"—* From

II. Pet. I. 15. *Moreover I will endeavour that you may be able after my Decease, to have these things always in Remembrance.*

A Noble Resolution! worthy of the great Apostle of the Circumcision. He resolves not only to Do all the Good he can, while he lives! But to lay a Foundation for the Good of the Dispersed Jews after his Decease. The Serious Thoughts of the Approaches of Death, are of good Use to quicken us to Duty. Indeed the Apostle express'd this his pious Resolution, when he knew his Death was near; *v. 14. Knowing that I must shortly put off this my Tabernacle.* He was indeed an old Man; and the time of his Martyrdom drew near, when he wrote this Epistle; yet the Resolution becomes the youngest Minister of the Gospel.

Doct. *That the faithful Ministers of the Gospel, will be much concerned for the good of their People after their Decease: That they may be an Holy and Happy People: That Religion may flourish among them: Or, That they may do Well, and that it may be Well with them.— [Examples, Christ, Paul, Peter.]*

Now

Now if you enquire, Whence it is that Ministers of the Gospel are concerned for the Good of their People after their Decease——?

A. In General, It is from their Love to them, and their Zeal for the Glory of God.——

More particularly there are Two Reasons;—

1. Because they know that a People's Spiritual Interest is their Main Interest.— *Deut. 32. 47.*—

And Religion flourishes in a Place, where God gives a People a Pastor after his own Heart.——

2. Because People are oftentimes (thro' the Imprudence and Folly of Men, the Subtilty of Satan, and the Righteous Judgement of God) very unhappy for a long time, after the Decease of their faithful Ministers. How often has there been great Contentions in our Towns and Churches about the Settlement of a Minister: Scarce any thing makes so much Noise in our Towns, and occasions (for the time) so much sinful Anger and evil Speaking.—— Hence the faithful Ministers of the Gospel may well be concerned, before they leave the World, as far as in them lies, to prevent such Inconveniencies when they are gone.

Again, If you enquire, How may the faithful Ministers of the Gospel express their Concern for the Welfare of their Hearers after their Decease? *Ans.* 1. By laying up a stock of Prayers for them.—— [*Act. 20. 32, 36. Col. 1. 3, 9. Eph. 1. 3. Rom. 1. 9.*]—— 2. By faithfully and prudently dispensing the Word of God unto them.— This tends— to Antidote them against Error and Temptation; against Seducers and false Teachers, that they may be exposed to, after their Decease.—

cease.— 3. By giving them the best Advice they can, as to their Successors in the work of the Ministry. How to Obtain them: How to Carry to them when obtained: And leaving their Charge with them to attend it, so far as is consonant to the Word of God.— And many of the Ministers in the Country that are dead, did at least on their Death-Bed, not only pray for their Churches, but also advise them what Course to take, in order to their getting a Minister when they are dead: Yet inasmuch as Minister's Lives are uncertain, it seems to me very agreeable, that while they are in Health, and enjoy the free use of their Reason, it is every way best for them to draw up what Advice of this kind they think proper to leave with their Hearers; and improve their utmost Interest and Influence with them, for their future Benefit. To be sure this can't be amiss: Ministers will die never the sooner for it; it will be some ease to their Minds when they come to lie on a Sick Bed.— They can ordinarily have no sinister Views in such Advice—&c. Hence it is my Opinion, That Ministers should, especially on some Occasions, give their Advice to their Hearers, as to this Affair, to prevent their taking wrong Steps, and following such Precedents as may lead them into grievous Perplexities, and be a lasting and irreparable Injury to others. I shall therefore use the freedom with you, my Brethren, tho' I han't the advantage of Age to enforce my Advice, yet shew mine Opinion, what Method you should take, to obtain a Minister when I shall be taken from you, or become incapable to serve you, in the blessed Work of the Ministry. Indeed

Indeed the Circumstances of a Place and People do alter so much in a few Years, that some Articles of Advice, that may be proper now, may be very unsuitable afterward. Wherefore I propose at present, to give only such general Advice, as will either be suitable in all Cases, or that will probably be suitable for you, my Brethren, upon my leaving of you.

In the first place then, I advise you, my Friends, when you are destitute of a Minister, (until you can be supplied with one to preach to you, that you are advised will be proper to settle with you) to go to Meering to *Haverhill*, and other the neighbouring Churches, as is most convenient for you; unless you can get some Body to supply the neighbouring Ministers, whom I would have you get, if you can, to preach with you in their turns, on this Occasion. I then advise you, to take the first Opportunity to keep a Day of Humiliation and Prayer, to bewail your Sins with respect to your former Minister, and to beg of God to chuse a Minister for you; to give to you a Pastor after his own Heart. This has been the laudable Practice of these Churches, and I doubt not your compliance with it, and therefore shall not insist farther on it; only be caution'd that you be not so preposterous as to chuse a Minister, or resolve who you will have, if possible, before you have spread the Case before the Lord. Be advised also to invite a suitable Number of the neighbouring Elders to assist you in carrying on the Work of that Day.

In the close of the Day, let the Deacons of the Church wait on the Reverend Elders, in the

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Name of the Church, and Town too, if it may be, and having given them most hearty Thanks for their Labour of Love among you, desire them to advise you whom to apply your selves to, and what Steps you shall take in your future Proceeding in this great Affair; desiring them, if they are Strangers to the Candidates for the Ministry, to enquire for you at Cambridge, or where they think proper; and to give you notice, who they can advise to. Remember, that *in the multitude of Counsellors there is safety*; or as some chuse to read it, In advising with such as are most able to give Advice, there is safety. Ordinarily the neighbouring Ministers are most proper Judges, who is most suitable for their Neighbourhood. Ministers are the Eyes of the Churches, and their Spiritual Guides; and if they are able, and it be their Business to guide Souls to Christ and Heaven, certainly they are able to judge who are qualified for the Work.— Don't be satisfied in this Affair, with the Advice of One that advises to a Relation; such Advice may mislead you.

Having then asked Advice of the neighbouring Elders, after they have with you, solemnly by Prayer with Fasting, sought to God to direct them what Advice to give you; don't needlessly and unreasonably act without it; much less divers from it, or contrary to it. Don't be wise in your own Conceit; don't lean to your own Understanding; be not high minded, but fear—. Remember that where no Counsel is, the People fall; and that it is a mocking of the Messengers of the Lord, a mocking God himself, to ask Counsel of his Ministers in such an Affair, under such

such Circumstances; and then to act contrary to it, unless there can be a good Reason assigned why you do so.

Again, unless you should be advised to the contrary, or don't chuse the first that you shall be advised to go to; come off fairly and honourably with Him, before you proceed to hear another. Don't pretend to hear several first, and then to come to a choice: Because it has been found by sad Experience, that this Method tends to divide People: For it has been found oftentimes, that there are as many Parties in Towns, as there are Persons that preach: And if People should hear more than One, if they like that One, and be advised to him, why not Eight or Ten, if so many can be had? But if a People are unanimously advised to the first, and they generally like him, and there is no solid Reason why they shou'd not chuse him when he is tried and proved, and the Neighbouring Elders and Churches signify their Approbation of him, and Desire of his Settling in their Neighbourhood, what shou'd hinder their chusing him? Why shou'd they run the venture of Dividing among themselves, or grieving their Neighbours by hearing Others?

Again, When you have taken Advice, and are now to hear in order to a Choice, don't be Governed by Affection, but by Judgment. Don't say, I don't fancy him, I don't fancy his Preaching or Praying, or Conversation, when you can give no solid Reason why you don't. Don't suffer yourselves to be prejudiced unreasonably against any Minister. Consider, Does he speak as the Oracles of God? Is he furnished with Ministerial

Accomplishments? Especially has he the Spirit of a Gospel-Minister so far as you can judge? Is he a real Christian, a sincere Convert? He is most like to do much Service.

Be sure aim at the Glory of God in the choice of a Minister. Don't chuse one because you think he'll not be severe against Sin, and will let you go on quietly in Sin: Don't prefer One, because he'll come cheaper than another. Don't be so foolish and impious as to think the cheapest Minister the most Excellent. Don't chuse One to cross one another, or any body else; but aim, I say, chiefly at the Glory of God in this great Affair. Whether you eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the Glory of God. Remember, if you act from a Spirit of Covetousness, or Revenge in such an Affair, it is an aggravated Sin; and tho' you may cover it from Men, you can't hide it from God; but he will call you into Judgement therefor: For every idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give an Account in the Day of Judgment: How much more of their Behaviour in an Affair of this Nature, of the Principle you act from, and the End you aim at! Consider then, who is like to do most Service for God, and bring most Glory to his Name, and do most to promote his Kingdom, and the Salvation of your Souls; and endeavour to chuse such an One.

Again, Covet earnestly the best Gifts. This we are expressly commanded to do. Get the most learned Person you can, if otherwise well accomplished. Gifts must not be despised. They'll enable to divide the Word of Truth—— And yet

yet shew I unto you what is more excellent. Labour to chuse one Orthodox in the Doctrine of the Decrees; in the Doctrine of Regeneration, in the Doctrine of Free-will, in the Doctrine of Justification, in the Doctrine of Perseverance;—One that is sound in God's Statutes; one of a good Conversation.

Labour to chuse one that may be agreeable to all the neighbouring Ministers and Churches, if possible; especially to the Elder and Church at *Haverhil*; according to the excellent Advice in our Platform of Discipline: Read and peruse well that Chapter that treats concerning the choice of an Elder, and act accordingly. Verily the Communion of Churches is much upheld by the Unity and good Agreement of the Elders in the Vicinity; and their Disagreement tends to hinder it. The Interest of Religion depends very much, humanely speaking, on the good Agreement of the neighbouring Elders. If they love one another, and agree well together, they will strengthen one another in their Work: If they disagree, they will weaken each other's Hands, and discourage each other's Hearts more than a little. Churches therefore ought, what in them lies, to suit their neighbouring Ministers and Churches, in the choice of a Minister. To be sure they should not chuse designedly to grieve and cross them. I not only advise but charge you solemnly, that you act not with such a naughty unchristian Spirit in the choice of Ministers. Remember you are not only to chuse a Minister for your selves, but a Neighbour for the neighbouring Elders and Churches; and one who

who after a while, it's probable, your neighbouring Churches will have occasion to seek to for Advice and Assistance in the like case: And therefore for Churches to have no regard to their neighbouring Elders and Churches in their choice, is very *Disorderly* and *Unneighbourly*, and of a very fatal Tendency. They are very blind that can't see it. Remember, the Rule in this case is, Do as you would be done by. Deal by the neighbouring Elders and Churches, as you would have them deal by you in the like case. Therefore do nothing rashly. Don't push on an Affair of this Nature too hastily, lest you repent at leisure. Don't Cabal about chusing a Minister, but labour to see God going before you. The less of Man appears, the more of God will appear in such an Affair. Let every one labour to inform his Judgement impartially concerning the Qualifications of the Person proposed to choice. Don't decline any thing reasonable and proper for this end.

Be persuadable by Wise and Good Men, in such an Affair. Though you shou'd not be flatter'd or wheedled, nor driven in such an Affair, yet shew your selves Men, by being willing to hearken to Reason; and shew your selves Christians, endowed with that Wisdom which is easy to be entreated; and not like the Horse and Mule which have no Understanding.

Let the Church stand fast in the Liberty where-with Christ hath made them free, and go before the Town according to the wholesome Law of the Province, and the laudable Practice of these Churches from the beginning; and manage the whole

whole Affair orderly. Labour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace: Studying to be Quiet; every one acting in his own Sphere: being ready to condescend as far as Reason and Religion will allow, for the sake of Peace.

And when you have made your choice, don't break upon Terms, if it may be avoided. O Sirs, love God and your Souls better than this comes to. Remember the Gospel will bear its own Charges: and that which is done to the Ministers of the Gospel out of your Estates, is God's and not yours; and your withholding it tends to Poverty.

And if when you have chosen, any should be *uneasie*: let those that have their choice carry prudently to them; let them see and understand, you are grieved at your heart, that they are not gratified as well and as much as you: And assure them, if they can see any thing in the whole affair, wherein you have miss'd it, tho' you can't at present, yet you should be glad to see it: and tell them, if it be really as they think, that you have miss'd it, you are sorry for it, and ask their Pardon. Remember that yielding sometimes (though not always) pacifieth great Offences. Thus carry friendly to them, and do what you can, that the Minister you have chosen may do so too: And don't insult them, whether they are right or wrong; ordinarily that will do no good. Be very tender towards them, and gain them if possible. If they are unreasonably Obstinate, treat them fairly, and leave them to Providence. And as for such as think they are, or are really wronged by the Choice of the Minister,

fter, if you are treated as I have directed, forgive the Offence, and don't make ill worse, by maintaining Contention. If the Majority don't carry to you as I have directed, ask Advice of the neighbouring Ministers what to do; and comply with it, unless you can give a good Reason why you don't.

Through the whole Affair, watch and pray that ye enter not into Temptation. You can't expect a Blessing, if you don't act religiously in such an Affair. And having obtained a good Minister, carry well to him. Visit him frequently: Be thankful for him: Do well by him: Pray much for him: Stand for him and by him as much as you can: Attend diligently and constantly, and endeavour to profit by his Ministry. Don't unnecessarily oppose and grieve him, — study to be Blessings to him in all regards.

This is the sum of the Advice I have to give you, in this affair; In which I have humbly sought to God to direct me in giving you this Advice, and weighed the several Articles as I could. I have no Sinister Views, nor Self Ends to promote: And though you may advise with those, whilst I live, or after I am Dead, that are more able to Advise you; yet you can advise with None that loves you more, or wishes you better, or is more concerned for your Well-Doing and Well-Being. If I see cause to alter my thoughts in what I have offered, I shall give you an account of it, with my Reasons. If any of you dislike or disapprove any Article in my Advice, I'd be glad you'd inform me of it, with the reasons thereof. I purpose to Transcribe what I have now offered, if it find Acceptance

ceptance with you, and note the Scriptures that it is founded on, which I han't time now to turn to: And leave it for you to make what Use of, you see meet when I am gone. And in the mean time, I wish, if I should live to have an Assistant in the work of the Ministry, and you shou'd see cause to get one for me, that you may get one that may in all respects excel me, — and the like I wish my Successor may be; And shall not cease to pray for the Church and Town of *Bradford*, and Congregation belonging to it, that this Golden Candlestick may be illuminated with Burning and Shining Lights, even to the second Coming of the Son of Man.

And now the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you: My love be with you all in Christ Jesus, Amen. 1 Cor. 16. 23, 24.

CONCLUSION.

I expected to have inserted some more Papers of Mr. Symmes's, one at least, *scil.* A Letter about *Consociation*, which a few Years ago he drew up to send, with his Church, to the neighbouring Churches for that End; but it cannot at present be found. I shall now only add (as the Sum and Confirmation of my plain Account) his Character as it was given in the *Boston News-Letter*, No. 1133.

Bradford, Octob. 9. 1725. On Wednesday last, between 12 & 1 in the Morning, Died here the Reverend Mr. *Thomas Symmes*, the Faithful Pastor of the Church in this Place: who having Preach-

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ed, first for some Years at *Boxford*, then succeeded his Father in the Ministry here : continued therein for above 17 Years ; and died in the 48th Year of his Age.

His Death was sudden and unexpected ; for tho' his Distemper was Chronical, He had so much Spirit to sustain his Infirmities, that he complained not much, till a little before his Death. About three Weeks before, being call'd to preach at a Fast, in *Newbury*, on account of the Sicknes prevailing there, he found himself very much indisposed with a great Pain in his Breast——: The next Sabbath at Evening he was taken with bleeding at the Nose ; and again Tuesday Morning following he bled for the space of two Hours ; but held up till the next Sabbath, and performed the publick Service of that Day but very faint : The next Tuesday Night he fell a bleeding again, which continued, without Intermission, about twenty six Hours ; from which time he languished a Week longer and died.

He was descended from a Line of Venerable Ancestors, employed in the same Sacred Office with himself ; whose Father, Grand-father, and Great-Grand-father were famous Ministers of the Gospel.

He was a goodly Person ; of a vivid and comely Countenance ; of a strong and sanguine Constitution : of a very sprightly Genius ; a cheerful and quick Temper ; which being sanctified made him the more ready to every good Work.

He was Exemplary for his early Piety, and continued a cheerful, devout, lively, zealous and hum-

humble Christian, as long as he liv'd ; and ended his Life with a most rational, sedate and comfortable Assurance of his Eternal Well-being.

He was a true *Calvinist* — ; a wise and faithful Minister of the Gospel ; He was uncommonly furnished for his sacred Office ; A Man of bright Parts ; a hard Student ; a polite Scholar ; and as diligently improved his Talents. His *Prayers* were always Pathetical, Submiss & Fervent, and excellently adapted to all Occasions. He gave himself very much unto Prayer, not only at the stated Seasons — ; but on Days of Fasting, which he frequently observed in Secret, and very much promoted in Publick, on special Occasions, and found great success in. He was a correct & pertinent, pungent and undaunted *Preacher* ; never feared the Faces of Men ; nor shun'd to Declare the whole Counsel of God. He had a Clear Pleasant Voice ; and *Excelled* in his most Lively & Artful Pronunciation. He had a good Spirit of Government, Zeal and Courage to *Rule* in the House of God.

He took great *Delight* in his Study ; and greater in the Duties of Publick Worship, especially Singing God's Praises. — Was scarce ever Weary of Praying & Preaching ; He had a very great Care & Concern for the Rising Generation, took great Pains to Instruct them by Catechising in Private & Publick, and frequently Preaching at the Young Mens Meetings : And he also diligently inspected the whole Flock, by Pastoral Visits, and sometimes sending for many of them to his own House, and was *Eminently* Skilful and Serviceable in Private Application to Souls.

He was a Person of a Catholick Spirit, Generous Principles, a Liberal Soul; and much given to Hospitality, a Faithful Friend—. Was always Cheerful & Profiting in his Conversation, & very much Recommended Religion thereby. He had a hearty Concern for the Publick Weal, especially the good Order & Establishment of the Churches and the Power of Godliness in New-England.

In a word, He was a Publick Extensive Blessing, highly Esteemed in his Life; much Lamented at his Death; and Honourably Interr'd by his Kind People. *October 8.*



F I N I S.

Advertisements.

Lately Publish'd, and Sold, by Samuel Gerrish :

Historical Memoirs of the Fight with the Indians at Piggwacket, May 9. 1725. With a Sermon occasion'd by the Fall of the Brave Capt. John Lovewell, and several of his valiant Company, in that Heroic Action. By the late Reverend Mr. Thomas Symmes. The Second Edition.

Ashton's Memorial. An History of the strange Adventures, and signal Deliverances of Mr. Philip Ashton of Marblehead in N. E. W. after he had made his Escape from the Piliv'd alone on a Desolate Island for about Six Months, &c. With a short Account of Nicholas Merritt, who was taken at the same time. To which is added, A Sermon on Dan. III. 17. By the Reverend Mr. John Barnard, Pastor of a Church in Marblehead. The First Impression of this Entertaining History being almost sold off, A Second Edition will be made with all convenient Speed.

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Ratio Disciplina Fratrum NOV-ANGLO-
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Advertisements.

of *New-England*, agreeable to their *General Plan* of Church-Discipline: With the *Reasons* of their Practices, drawn from the *Holy Scriptures*, and illustrated from the *Judgment* of the *Fathers*, and the *Customs* of *Antiquity*.

Also,

PRACTICAL Discourses on the *HOLINESS* of *HEAVEN*. Preached at the Lecture in *Roxbury*: By the *Rev. Mr. Nehemiah Walter*.

There is also prepared for the Press and only waits for Subscriptions, *A Book Entituled,*

MERCY Magnified in the *Salvation* of *Indians*. Or, Some brief Account of the *Lives* of above *Hundred Persons*, chiefly *Inhabitants* of *Martha's* *and*: Wherein the *Remarkable* and *Encouraging* Success of the *Gospel* among these *Poor* *ifed* People will yet further *Appear*; for *Glory* of *GOD*, and the *Grateful* *Entertainment* and *Excitation* both of the *Present* and *Future* *Generations*, even of the *English* as well as the *Indians*. Very carefully *Collected* by the *Reverend* *Mr. Experience Mayhew*, Minister of the *Gospel* among the *Indians* on *Martha's Vineyard*.

Proposals for *Subscriptions* will in a few *Days* be published by *Samuel Gerrish* Bookseller in *Cornhill*, together with *One* of the *Remarkable* and *Entertaining* *Examples* of *Early Piety*, for a *Specimen*.

